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Mrs Jones's Evening Party

by

Edmund Routledge

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SYLLABUS.

THE Family Council—Miss Tozer's Letter—The Assembly—Arrival of Jack Plastic—Shakespearian Puzzles—The Bewitched Leg of Pork—The Conjuring Tricks—Nan of Horselydown—The Party at Our School—Emily Tozer's Song—The Woman without a Head—Valentine and Orson, or the Swell and the Rough—Flutter's Fanciful Roll of Riddles—Warble's Bouquet culled from the Poets—Mrs. Jones's Quaint Collection of Queer Epitaphs—The new Drawing-room Burlesque.

MRS. JONES'S EVENING PARTY.

"Now, Jones, we really must, you know—we must give a party. Why, here, haven't we been gadding about to balls and other scenes of festive light, as the poet says, ever since we've been married, and that's five years ago, and yet we have never had a party? Therefore I repeat, Jones, that we must have a party. What's more, I have made up my mind to it, and when once I take a fancy into my head, I always carry it out. You know that, don't you, Jones?"

Thus spoke Mrs. Jones to her husband, as they sat in their snug back parlour at Clapham, one evening, about eight o'clock, towards the end of November. From the foregoing speech the reader may reasonably conclude that Mrs. Jones was a lady not unaccustomed to have her own way: indeed, her husband's answer will be found to confirm that conjecture. Mr. Jones, who had been twice married, was left a widower at the age of forty, with one incumbrance or blessing on his hands in the shape of a boy nine years old. After dragging on a cheerless sort of existence for a few years, he was fortunate enough at last to gain the affections of the fascinating widow Tozer, who happened also to have an incumbrance in the form of a girl, who had arrived at the somewhat mature age, for a spinster, of twenty-five. The courtship was short, incumbrance was weighed against incumbrance, and in less than five years after the first Mrs. Jones had vacated one of the easy-chairs which stood by the parlour fire, the place was better *filled* by Mrs. Jones No. 2, who was in

all respects as different from the former sharer of her husband's affection as one woman could be from another.

The first Mrs. Jones was a very little woman; the second was five feet six, with breadth to correspond. The first Mrs. Jones was a very indifferent household manager, and, as may be surmised, both extravagant and wasteful; to the second helpmate the first line of a German song might aptly be applied,—

Thou art so *near*, though yet so far;

for she was one of the closest women that ever held the domestic reins, and, consequently, was what is called "a capital manager." For, sooner than have a fresh bottle of wine brought up from the cellar, she went for days without tasting that luxurious beverage, and succeeded in persuading her husband that he was better without it, although the eager manner in which she swallowed a glass at anybody else's house showed that she was not altogether averse to the juice of the grape. Then Mrs. Jones No. 1 was not what most people would call a clever woman—she was only a simple, lovable little creature, who thought her time was better employed in looking after her dear boy, than reading novels or scientific books, very little of which could she understand; whereas Mrs. Jones No. 2 was quite a glutton in her love of reading. Novels she devoured at the rate of a volume a day. Books of biography, of medicine, or treatises on abstruse sciences, all fell alike victims to her insatiate appetite. She studied "obscure diseases of the brain" till she was convinced that everybody in the world was mad but herself; and gloated over "The Origin of Species" till she was persuaded that the only difference between man and a monkey was, that the former had a *hippocampus* in his brain, and the latter had not. In fact, she was, in the general acceptation of the word, a remarkably well-read woman, and had done all that was needful to justify her

claim to that title except writing a book. It was in consequence of "her very superior mind, her great intellect," Jones gave out, that he married her; and she took him, as she told her friends, because he was a simple, easy-going man, who wanted somebody to look after him. At the time when our chronicle opens, they had been married five years. That period had passed, on the whole, very pleasantly; the chief bickerings that occurred to mar the calmness of the domestic sky were those which took place between Mr. Harry Jones, now aged nineteen, and his stepmother; for Mr. Harry, although somewhat bashful before company (as boys of his age often are), never hesitated to correct his stepmother when she made a mistake in quoting from the poets, or when giving the company the benefit of her scientific knowledge on some occult subject, a habit in which she was often wont to indulge. There was, therefore, not much love lost between Harry and Mrs. Jones, and each disliked and rather feared the other in consequence.

"Well then, Jones, we can have a party, eh?"

Women know well enough that, when they are perfectly certain of having a wish fulfilled, their husbands are all the more pleased if they put that wish in the form of a request.

"Yes, my dear, if you very much desire it," was Jones's reply; "but you see it will lead to a great deal of expense; and although I don't grudge my money, yet I don't like to see it thrown away."

"You are quite right in saying you don't grudge your money, Mr. Jones," replied his wife, somewhat tartly; "it's my idea, and I have constantly told you so, that you do often throw it away. For instance, you are far too liberal to that son of yours;—however, that's neither here nor there. As for me, you know well enough, Jones," continued she, blandly, "that I have never been accused by anybody of extravagance."

"I am ready to admit that, my dear," said Jones, with the most imperceptible wink in the world.

"Very well, then, you may be sure that I should not be disposed to give this party had I not thoroughly considered the expense attendant on it. Now you are aware, my dear, that my daughter Emily is, as some sweet poet says, 'on the shady side of eight-and-twenty,' and it is high time that something should be done on her account; and although I do not encourage a parcel of young men about the house, yet who knows but that at a party somebody may be smitten with her."

"As you please, Mrs. Jones; have your own way."

At that moment the door opened, and in walked Mr. Harry, who had just returned from the City. He was followed by his mother-in-law's daughter, Miss Emily Tozer, a young lady of the gushing order, who did all in her power, by her juvenile ways, to show that Nature, or Fate, had made a mistake in antedating her birth by some ten years.

"Good evening, father," said Harry.

"Good evening, my boy. Any news in the City?"

"Oh, not much. There was a fellow run over in Gracechurch Street when I came by; and Sir Robert Carden sentenced a batch of orange-girls to a term of imprisonment this morning, for standing in one of the narrow courts of Cornhill; and I saw your friend Mr. Jellyboy this morning, and he says his children have got the measles; and then——"

"Perhaps Mr. Harry will allow me to say a word," interrupted Mrs. Jones, in her most freezing and dignified manner.

"Certainly, ma'am," said Harry, at the same time rising to get the second volume of Kinglake's "Crimea" off the sideboard.

"Do you know, Emily," continued Mrs. Jones, turning to her daughter, "that Mr. Jones wants to give a party?"

"Oh, what a dear, kind pa' you are!" exclaimed the delighted young lady, jumping up, and throwing her arms round Mr. Jones's neck. "Oh, that will be so nice! Won't it, Harry?"

"Pretty fair," mumbled Harry.

"Oh, ma', dear," continued Emily, "let's ask lots of nice people. There's Timothy Flutter, and Jack Plastic, and heaps of fellows who can waltz well."

"Waltz, Emily!" shouted Mrs. Jones, apparently horrified. "Do you think for a moment, child, that I will have dancing in my house?"

"Oh, ma', dear!" was the *child's* expostulatory reply.

"Won't it be slow?" chimed in Harry, without looking up from his book.

"Well, I must say, dear, I should have liked a quadrille or a set of lancers, or something of that sort," suggested Mr. Jones, timidly.

"Lor' bless me, how absurdly you talk," replied the lady, disdainfully. "You dance, Mr. Jones! a man of your age and size to think about dancing; besides, it is so childish, and aptly shows how much degenerated we are from the type of our ancestors. Why, in ancient times, before the dissipation and extravagance which are so characteristic of the present generation were in force, nobody indulged in such frivolous recreation as can possibly be found in amusement of a saltatory nature."

"Stop, stop, ma'am, there you are wrong," said Harry, starting up. "What about the Pyrrhic dance, which Pyrrhus is said to have revived B.C. 318, and which has usually been ascribed to Minerva. Why, ma'am, dancing has been a favourite amusement ever since the world was created."

"Upon my word, Mr. Harry," replied the lady, with a forced smile, "you take one up very sharply. How can you expect a woman to know anything about the high classics? But that isn't the question. I won't have

dancing at this party; so there's an end to it. I object to it on principle; and if, at the earnest solicitation of my husband, I consent to have a party——"

Here Mr. Jones was about to interrupt; but he was silenced instantly by a look from his wife, who continued,—

"I must expressly stipulate that there shall be no dancing. But, as there must be some recreation, I don't object to a little game of cards, for instance."

"Cards, my dear! did you say cards?" exclaimed Mr. Jones, looking almost resolute, as he planted himself like a screen in front of the fire. "Now, Sarah," continued he, in a voice in which both authority and persuasion were pleasantly blended, "I let you do as you like in most things, but as long as I live, not a card shall be seen in this house. My father never allowed me to play cards."

"Yes; but remember, your father, with all his sanctimoniousness, was a bankrupt twice," rejoined Mrs. Jones.

"True, true, my dear; but, as he said, if he had taken to cards, he must have been in difficulties much oftener. No, my dear, no cards, I say."

"Well," remarked Harry, "if we are to have no dancing and no cards, what are we to do?"

"Have a nice game at Loto, or some cheap and instructive historical or geographical game, in which we can employ our minds profitably," replied Mrs. Jones; "or we can read papers on intellectual subjects."

"Oh, ma', dear, let's have hunt the slipper, or puss in the corner, it's such fun," said Miss Emily.

"Nonsense, child; don't be absurd."

"Well, I think I shall be engaged on the night of this wonderful party," quietly said Harry.

"Well, and so you may. Nobody will miss a *boy* like you."

Mrs. Jones laid great stress upon the word boy, as she knew it was a blow which was sure to tell; for Master

Harry was in the transition state which acts as a link between the grub of childhood and the butterfly of early manhood; and any taunt on this tender point was very galling to his dignity.

"Pray, don't speak so sharp, Sarah, my dear," said Mr. Jones in a soothing voice.

"There you are again, Mr. Jones. You always take your son's part against me."

"No I don't, indeed, my dear."

"Come now, pa', don't let's say any more about it," said the young lady, "but settle at once all about this party. I think if we ask Mr. Jack Plastic, he's sure to amuse us."

"Is that the only reason why you want him asked?" inquired Mr. Jones, winking at his step-daughter.

"Oh pa', dear, don't, you make me blush," said the young lady, casting down her eyes demurely.

"Well, Emily, then to please you," said Mrs. Jones, "we'll have Mr. Plastic, although, as a rule, I don't like young artists. They are always so poor, and yet carry off their poverty with so much assurance; but then Mr. Plastic is very clever, and will probably write an ode for the occasion, or something of that sort.

"Come now, let's put down the names on paper. First, there's Mr. Plastic, then Mr. Timothy Flutter. True he's rather nervous, and is somewhat given to blushing, but he's sure to know lots of riddles, and they may amuse the younger guests."

"And there's my old friend Mr. Stouter," urged Mr. Jones.

"What, the stout churchwarden, pa', dear?" remonstratively insinuated the young lady.

"Yes, my dear girl, we must ask him, because he always has some good stories to tell about what he and his old friend, Mr. Wippermann, did when they were in office."

"Oh, but, my dear," replied Mrs. Jones, "your fat friend is so very wearisome. Everything one says reminds him, somehow or other, of his friend Wippermann."

"Never mind Stouter's little failings, he is sure to amuse us; so put his name down, Emily," said Mr. Jones.

"Then, ma', we must have that dear Mr. William Warble, who sings all those pretty songs, and who thinks so deeply. What a duck of a voice the man has, to be sure."

"Don't use so many expletive words," said Mrs. Jones, endeavouring to look shocked at the affectionate tone her daughter assumed in speaking of members of the opposite sex.

"I don't myself object to Mr. Warble," quietly said Jones; "but then he is a poet, and he always makes such a confounded fuss whenever he is asked to sing, that, hang me, if I don't think I shall give up asking him to oblige the company."

This awful threat was met by a sardonic smile from Mrs. Jones, who gently suggested that her husband was not to imagine he was the only person in the house capable of asking a young man to sing.

"And now that Emily, after her usual manner, has only thought of asking gentlemen, who in the present list stand in the proportion of six to two ladies, don't you think it would be as well to put down a few girls?" said Harry, looking up from Kinglake's account of the Battle of the Alma.

"Oh, Harry, how can you say so?" said Miss Tozer, endeavouring to blush. "I am sure I never think of the men; besides, sir, it was an act of politeness to your sex to put their names down first."

"And I should like to know," said Mrs. Jones, in a peculiar tone, which she always assumed when about to say anything bitter—"I say that I should like to know

what difference it makes to you whether we ask any young ladies or not?—for you know that you are so unpleasantly shy, that you are always afraid to speak to them."

"Am I, though!" was all that the discomfited Harry could say, as he returned to a perusal of Kinglake.

"Now then, Emily, write down the two Miss Gilpins; they'll be able to sing a song, and are very fond of games, I know."

"Yes, ma', dear; and then there's Polly Armstrong and her ma'; the latter will be capital company for you."

"Emily, I am surprised at your telling me who is fit company for me."

"I am very sorry, ma', I'm sure—and then there's——"

"Stop, stop, child! let me see how many names you have down already. We must not ask more than we can afford to entertain."

"No; we must not, indeed," somewhat pompously echoed Mr. Jones, who had not spoken for some time.

"Well, then, ma', I'll read them to you. There are six gentlemen — Mr. Jones, Harry, Mr. Plastic, Mr. Stouter, Mr. Flutter, and Mr. Warble; and just the same number of ladies, too—Mrs. Jones, the two Miss Gilpins, Mrs. Armstrong, Polly Armstrong, and myself."

"That number will be ample — twelve are quite sufficient. Don't you think so, Mr. Jones?" said the lady.

"Oh, quite enough, my dear—quite enough," replied Mr. Jones, delighted at being appealed to by his wife.

"And now, what shall we call the entertainment? I don't like the word party."

"Well, ma', dear, as the aristocracy call their parties *thés dansants*, why shouldn't we term ours a *souper chantant?*"

"Well, so let it be. I'll look after the household arrangements. And now to fix the day. Suppose we

say Friday, the 18th December. Friday is a very good day for a party, because we can eat at dinner on Sunday the remains of the feast, and that saves cooking. I always like to give my servants as little work as possible to do on Sunday. So now, let's see—there are twelve people. I shall not get a regular set-down supper, because it wastes so much time. We'll have two pairs of fowls, several plates of sandwiches, a tongue, some custards, blancmange, and some nice jellies. This, with one nice bottle of sherry, and two of ginger wine, will be a feast fit for a potentarch."

"Potentate you mean, possibly," said Harry.

"But what about the crackers, ma', dear?" said the daughter—"Oh! they are such fun!

> When I gaze on those eyes so bright and so fair,
> I feel thy influence everywhere.

That's the motto of one that Mr. Plastic gave me last Christmas."

"Emily, Emily, don't be so giddy. No, I will not have crackers; they encourage too much familiarity, and, besides, I consider them an unnecessary expense. Don't you, Mr. Jones?"

"Certainly, my dear," was the husband's reply.

"Shall I write the invitations?" next inquired Emily.

"How extravagant you are, Emily, to be sure," answered her mamma. "What is the good of wasting twelve stamps, to say nothing of the same number of sheets of paper and envelopes, when we can go and ask the guests ourselves, and get lunch at some of the places into the bargain?"

"Why, ma'am," said Harry, always delighted at catching his stepmother, "you are never going to Plastic's chambers to ask him, or to Islington to take lunch with Flutter and Warble?"

"Dear me! How stupid you are!" was Mrs. Jones's

condescending reply. "I don't require to be taught propriety by a boy—do I, Mr. Jones?"

"Certainly not, my dear."

"No, Sir, Mr. Jones will ask the gentlemen. You'll ask Mr. Stouter, Mr. Flutter, and Mr. Warble—won't you, husband?"

"With pleasure, my dear; but as my time is rather occupied just now, I think I'll write to them. It'll only cost threepence, you know."

"Oh, of course you may do as you please, Mr. Jones; but I think a good walk to Islington would do you much more good than spending threepence."

"Well, we'll see," replied the gentleman, who by this time had become convinced of the advantages of passive resistance.

"Now, Emily, you must write to Mr. Plastic, and tell him that he must do all he can to amuse us. By the bye, have you a stamp in your pocket, dear?" continued she, turning to her husband.

"No, I have not; but I have a penny, if that'll do."

"Just as well," replied the lady, taking the proffered penny; "and besides, it will save me the trouble of changing a threepenny-piece."

The family council then broke up. Miss Tozer glided out of the room for her writing-desk, singing "Parlate le d'Amor," from Gounod's "Faust," as she went along. Mr. Jones returned to a perusal of the *Times*. Harry was soon lost in the second volume of Kinglake, and Mrs. Jones went to the bookcase to find out in the Dictionary the meaning of the word palæontology, before she began to read Professor Owen's book on the subject.

Miss Tozer lost no time in writing to Mr. Plastic. Her note ran as follows:—

MINERVA HOUSE, CLAPHAM,
25th November, 1863.

"MY DEAR MR. PLASTIC,

"I am desired by mamma to ask if *you* will favour us with *your* company on Friday, the 18th December, to meet a *few* select friends. As on former occasions *you* have given *us* a great deal of amusement, *I* trust that you will do all *you* can to make us laugh on the 18th, as mamma will not hear of dancing, and *historical* games are so slow. Please, dear Mr. Plastic, think of some new idea between this and then that will amuse the company, and believe me,

"My dear Mr. Plastic,

"Yours very sincerely,

"EMILY TOZER.

"JOHN PLASTIC, Esq."

It must be owned that Jack Plastic was not so highly delighted as he ought to have been, when he received this epistle. It is but too probable, however, that he entertained no great affection for Mrs. Jones, and looked upon her daughter's palpable intentions as a bore. So before he accepted the invitation he first called on the Armstrongs, and hearing from them that they, too, had been asked to the party, he resolved to go; and in order to have a good chance of paying some little attention to Miss Armstrong, who had lately created a deep impression upon his somewhat susceptible heart, he determined to write a little drawing-room play, in which there should be five parts (as he felt convinced that unless Emily Tozer were asked to act, she would be a prey to the green-eyed monster all the evening), acted respectively by Miss Tozer, Polly, another young lady, Warble, and himself. So he sat down and wrote to Miss Tozer as follows:—

"101, GRAY'S INN SQUARE,
"*28th November*, 1863.

"DEAR MISS TOZER,

"I need scarcely tell you that it will give me very much pleasure to accept your kind invitation for the 18th proximo. Although I know that your own graces and accomplishments are sufficient in themselves to amuse any circle, yet, in accordance with your request, I have ventured to provide some additional recreation for your guests, and have written a little Drawing-room Play, in which yourself, Miss Armstrong, another young lady, and Warble will, I hope, study parts. I will also bring my small collection of Conjuring Tricks with me, and if the fog has not utterly ruined my voice, I will endeavour to sing a new Comic Song I wrote some time ago. In addition to these attractions, I have sketched some Shakespearian Puzzles for Mrs. Jones to explain, knowing as I do what an ardent and well-read scholar she is of the works of the Immortal Bard. With kind regards to all your family circle,

"I remain,
"My dear Miss Tozer,
"Yours faithfully,
"JOHN PLASTIC."

"What a duck of a man!" fervently exclaimed Miss Tozer, as she kissed that part of the letter which bore the writer's name.

"My own graces and accomplishments, too. Oh, he must be in love with me, or he would never write like that; but then this play in which Polly Armstrong and I are to act. Polly Armstrong, indeed! I am almost sorry now that I asked that girl. She's a forward, conceited chit of nineteen, and I am sure she's setting her cap at Mr. Plastic. No girl with any self-respect would make such violent love to a man as Polly does to dear Jack,—that

is, Mr. Plastic. I suppose I must show this letter to Ma'. Dear, dear Jack! Down, down, beating heart," continued she, as she ran off to give the letter to Mrs. Jones, who had just returned from making some arrangements with the confectioner for the approaching event.

Mrs. Jones read the letter carefully, and although she at first objected to the little play, as being scarcely proper enough for the drawing-room, yet the mention of the Shakespearian puzzles, which she was to explain, soon put her in a good humour, and she actually went so far as to promise dear Em. that one dozen crackers should be purchased for the supper-table. All the other guests accepted their invitations, and promised to appear at Minerva House on the 18th of December, at eight o'clock. Flutter declared that he would bring fifty new Riddles; while Warble was to come laden with some very deep arguments and a part of his collection of rhymes. The hostess, in addition to her duties as key of the Shakespearian puzzles, had averred that she would recite her marvellous collection of Epitaphs at supper; for, said she, girls of a tender age, like those I have asked, are too shallow and silly to know much. It is only when a woman attains the age of forty that her superior knowledge shows itself. Her argumentative faculties, as it were, lie dormant between the ages of ten and forty, at which time she, if a woman of sense, takes to the culture of literature and the *beaux lettres*. Most of the visitors promised to bring with them some entertainment, which was to be generated on that evening for the benefit and amusement of the various guests assembled under the hospitable roof of Mr. and Mrs. Jones.

THE ASSEMBLY.

At length, after a time of great anxiety, fraught with the fate of jelly and blancmange, the long-expected evening arrived; and as the clock struck seven, Mr. Jones, who had been busily engaged for the last two hours in drawing ginger and sherry wine, appeared in the drawing-room, clad in a suit of glossy black clothes, the sombre nature of which was gracefully set off by the elaborate white waistcoat he had donned for the occasion. Mrs. Jones soon followed, arrayed in a becoming dress of black velvet (a present, by the bye, from her husband on their wedding-day), which imparted additional classic grandeur to her already dignified appearance. Soon came her daughter, wearing a robe of green tarlatan set off by an elegant red sash, and a blush-rose placed in her nut-brown hair. After sitting round the fire for nearly an hour, disturbed alone by the entrance of Harry, in whose attire there was nothing extraordinary, except an aspect of general discomfort on the part of the wearer, a knock was heard at the door, and a minute after a servant approached, announcing the arrival of Mr. Stouter.

"Ah, Stouter, my boy! how are you?" said Mr. Jones, rushing forward and meeting his official friend before he had gone half across the room.

"Pretty well, Jones, thank you; pretty well. How do you do, Ma'am? how are you, Miss Tozer? and you, Master Harry?"

Will it be believed that, in spite of the apparently

proper way in which each of these salutations was uttered, they were one and all displeasing to the persons addressed? Mrs. Jones was cross because Mr. Stouter shook hands with and shouted at ("Yes, sir; I say he shouted: the man can't speak in a proper voice," said she to Mr. Jones afterwards) her husband before he took any notice of her; Miss Tozer was equally vexed, because she was not addressed first; and Harry's indignation was indescribable, because he was called *Master* Harry,—Master, indeed, and he nearly twenty years old!

"Well, Stouter, old boy," said Mr. Jones, as soon as his visitor was seated, "and how do affairs go on in the Church?"

"Ah!" said Mr. Stouter, in his usual pompous style, and swelling with importance; "I can't say myself they're as well as I could wish. Now if old Wippermann had only been in office, it wouldn't have happened."

"You seem to have great faith in Mr. Wippermann," said Mrs. Jones, somewhat sarcastically.

"So I have, ma'am: I respect him. Ah! he was a great churchwarden—a noble churchwarden; and then what stories he used to tell! Talking about stories, I have got a fine one to tell you of him."

"That's right, Mr. Stouter; but we'll have that later on in the evening," said Mrs. Jones, condescendingly.

"Well, but now, I say, Stouter, what's this row in the parish about?" inquired Mr. Jones.

"Well, it ain't exactly a row, but it stands this way," replied Mr. Stouter. "You see, the time for the election of the new churchwardens is the first week after Easter Sunday. Well, now, up to the present time, the parishioners have elected both of them; but—would you believe it, sir and ma'am?—the Rev. Mr. Snatchall, our rector, has actually given notice that he intends to choose one, and to allow the parishioners to elect the other only. Sir, it ain't parochial; it's overthrowing our electoral privi-

leges, and striking a regular blow at our personal liberty."

"So it is, Mr. Stouter; I quite agree with you," replied Mrs. Jones, benignantly. "In the many books on the subject of parish law, it states, I believe, that in most of the London parishes the parishioners elect both the churchwardens themselves."

"Does it really, ma'am?" replied the official. "Bless me, what a deal you must have read, Mrs. Jones. May I ask in what book you got that valuable information?"

"Yes, I do read a great deal," replied Mrs. Jones, calmly. "Let me see now, what is the name of the book I studied lately on the subject? Dear me! what a treacherous memory I have, to be sure!"

Just as Mrs. Jones began tapping her head, after the manner customary among people when they wish to recollect something, the door was opened, and the servant announced the arrival of the Misses Gilpin.

No sooner had their names been announced, than an extraordinary change came over Mr. Harry Jones. His face suddenly assumed a bright scarlet colour, his teeth shook, and a strange smile pervaded his face as with the fingers of his right hand he fastened and unfastened the bottom button of his waistcoat with the greatest rapidity. Poor fellow, he was so very deeply in love with Bessie Gilpin, and yet so very nervous!

The Misses Gilpin,—two pleasant girls with nice cheery faces,—were dressed all in white, as befitted damsels of the ages of twenty and seventeen. Miss Tozer patronized these young ladies. It was a privilege of her superior age; but in spite of the haughty way in which she addressed them occasionally, they were both very fond of her, and of the Jones family collectively. Some of our readers will naturally be surprised that these two young ladies should appear alone at an evening party; but when

we tell them that although blessed with four younger sisters, Jane and Bessie Gilpin had no protecting brother to look after them, and that their father and mother were very deaf, and did not visit much, we trust that nobody will see the slightest impropriety in the unprotected state of the two young ladies, particularly as they only lived three doors off the Jones's house. After making the usual inquiries about their parents, and stating it as her opinion that the weather was sultry for the time of year, Mrs. Jones gave up talking to the young ladies, whom she looked upon as thoughtless chits, and therefore left them to the guardianship of her daughter and Harry, who by this time had mustered up courage enough to take a seat next to Bessie, and to tell her in confidence that he had not seen her for a very long time. A few minutes later Mrs. and Polly Armstrong sailed into the room, and as Miss Tozer did not altogether approve Polly's forward conduct before gentlemen, she left her and Mrs. Armstrong to talk to Mrs. Jones, after she had gone through the usual staid formalities of hearty hand-shaking and fervent kissing. All the guests had now arrived but the three single gentlemen, and as Mrs. Jones could not initiate any entertainment until Mr. Plastic appeared, the conversation became general, and consequently the time passed quickly with everybody except poor Emily, who had called herself (in her thoughts only) a fluttering thing, and had requested her heart to lie down once a minute at least. The next arrival was Mr. Warble, who came muffled up to the eyes, and bearing a roll of music looking very like a dropsical rolling-pin in a black cover. Of course, he had a very bad cold—in fact, he had been so ill that he had doubted very much whether he should have been able to come that evening; but he had made an effort, and there he was. The Joneses, who had heard the same tale repeated at every place where they had had the pleasure of meeting Mr. Warble, said, "Oh, indeed;

and that they were so sorry," after the most approved hypocritical fashion. Scarcely, however, had Mr. Warble found a seat, when a violent noise was heard outside the door, as if somebody had fallen up or down the stairs. On Harry rushing out to see what was the matter, he found Timothy Flutter rubbing his shins in great contrition, and on being asked what had happened, the poor fellow said that he had let his hat fall, and, unfortunately, had fallen over it; luckily though, he had not put his gloves on, or else the buttons would have fallen off too. Ha! ha!

Flutter was a monomaniac in the idea that everything he said was funny, and therefore he generally gave two short laughs at the end of each sentence he spoke.

After a second rub, and a statement that like a dog he had *barked* his knees (ha! ha!), he mustered up sufficient courage to enter the room.

Mr. Flutter was a fair-haired young man of three-and-twenty, whose defective vision rendered the assistance of spectacles necessary in order that he might see with whom he was conversing. As he entered the room, limping from the effects of his late accident, he made his way to the chair on which reclined gracefully the superincumbent form of Mrs. Jones.

"How do you do, Mr. Flutter?" said that lady, for she recognized him before Flutter could distinguish her.

"Quite well, Mrs. Jones," was the reply; "quite well. I have got a lot of riddles for you if I don't forget them. When is a door not a jar?"

Poor Mrs. Jones was in a dreadful way lest the entertainments should commence before the arrival of Jack Plastic, and would not even attempt to guess this riddle, until her M.C. (as she called him) made his appearance. At length, after waiting until half-past eight, a knock was heard, and Jack Plastic entered the room, followed by a servant bearing a blue bag full of some hard uneven sub-

stances, which stood out pointedly in all directions, and a large portfolio, which, in company with some papers, was placed in a corner of the room. Jack Plastic was one of those jolly, good-natured young fellows who are at everybody's service. In the way of personal description we content ourselves with saying that he had no hair on his face, and that he wore an eyeglass.

"Oh, you naughty man, to come so late," said Mrs. Jones, playfully tapping him with her fan; for the promise of the Shakespearian puzzles had put her in a good humour with Jack.

"'Pon my word, Mrs. Jones, I am very sorry," replied Jack, looking as penitent as he could; "but the fact was that I only finished the last puzzle five minutes before I started." The rogue had been dining with a friend, and reluctantly had torn himself away at eight o'clock, from the last bottle of port.

Jack Plastic then shook hands all round, and was soon ensconced in a seat between Polly Armstrong and Emily. The latter, when shaking hands with him, scarcely had the temerity to look at his face at all, particularly as he squeezed her hand in the most palpable manner possible (at least, so she thought).

"And now," said Mrs. Jones, rising, "we'll begin the festivities. Mr. Plastic, bring the Shakespearian puzzles, please."

We must here pause for an instant to indicate to the reader the positions of the different guests. Mrs. Jones was seated in the chair of state next to the fire, having on her right Mrs. Armstrong. It must be owned that Mrs. Jones was not very fond of her neighbour. She said that Mrs. Armstrong had no soul, for the good lady thought it was her duty rather to look after her children, to attend to her household duties, and to minister to her husband's wants, than to skim a lot of books of which she could understand but little. Next to her sat her daughter

Polly, with (as we have already stated) Jack Plastic on her right, comfortably ensconced between her and the gentle blushing Emily; but not at all inclined to agree with Macheath about being happy with either.

On the other side of Miss Tozer sat Mr. Flutter, who would have wished to murmur soft phrases into Emily's right ear; but, unfortunately, he seldom knew what to say to young ladies. He found by experience, that the weather was an object of little interest to them, and that an account of the charms of other young ladies fell listlessly on their ears. This fact, however, shows that Timothy could express his admiration for the good qualities of damsels; but from his innate modesty, he was obliged to dwell upon generalities, and rather than praise a young lady to her face, he preferred to flatter her by praising somebody else, thus demonstrating his affection for the female sex; but as nothing short of rudeness offends a lady so much as expressing your admiration for another lady, and asking her to coincide in your opinion, Mr. Flutter's attentions were not usually favourably received by giddy girls, and he was compelled to lapse into his bad habit of making a pun on almost everything he heard, and asking riddles in which a part of the question was so inextricably confused with the answer, that either his listeners guessed it at once, or else all the explanation in the world failed to make them see the joke.

Mr. Flutter's other neighbour was Mr. Warble, who was also seated next to Jane Gilpin, on whom report said he was very sweet. Mr. Warble was rather a retiring man. He sang well, and could turn a rhyme to suit his fancy; but he prided himself mostly on being a deep thinker of the German school of philosophy.

Seated almost behind Bessie Gilpin, whose pretty, childish little face looked charming under her glossy, wavy black hair, sat Harry. The poor youth was either too bashful to show himself direct to the world, or else he

chose a retired spot, in order to hold converse sweet with his Bessie undisturbed.

The last two in the circle, or segment of a circle, were the host and Mr. Stouter, who chatted on church matters, and talked theological shop, to their hearts' content.

And now taking a large piece of cardboard, on which were traced the cabalistic figures given in the adjacent illustration, Mrs. Jones, after seeing that she had the solution of the figures in her hand, placed it on the mantelpiece, and requested her friends to improve their knowledge of the immortal bard by solving the puzzle before them.

The first person to make a remark on the subject was Mr. Stouter, who alone saw a slight likeness, only as far as the face went, between his friend Wippermann and the gentleman with the money-bags.

"Perhaps money is one of the words," instantly suggested Miss Tozer, glancing askant at her neighbour.

"Well, now," suggested Mr. Flutter, "if Dundreary had been in existence when Shakespeare wrote his plays, I should have said that he was in the puzzle; but, as he was not, why it ain't. Ha! ha!"

"Something about money and a serpent," said Mr. Warble. "'Twas ever so. In all times the serpent and money have stood as emblems of temptation. Ah, how happy we shall be when there is no such thing as money."

"We shall indeed, Mr. Warble," was Mrs. Jones's sympathetic reply.

"No, I've got it," said Flutter, starting up. "Look! There's money on the table, and the letters *a c* close to it. Do you see? Well, that's moneyac—maniac, is it not? Ha! ha!"

"No, Mr. Flutter, it is not," replied Mrs. Jones, impressively.

What a shame it was for all the guests to burst out laughing at Flutter's idea. Poor fellow! It made him

SHAKESPEARIAN PUZZLE, No. 1.

feel so uncomfortable and nervous, that he was afraid to speak for five minutes, and actually let twenty opportunities for splendid puns pass unheeded.

At last, Harry, after musing some time, inquired if it had anything to do with fox and geese? "It's a jolly game, I can tell you. We used to play it at school."

"Ridiculous," was the hostess's comment on the idea. "Fox and geese, indeed! Why, there's nothing about them on the *tableau*."

"Oh, yes, ma' dear, in the couch, look," said Emily. "Strange bedfellows, aren't they, Mr. Plastic?"

"That's it," said Harry, jumping up. "Strange bedfellows. I've got it now. Do you see? Misery acquaints a man with strange bedfellows."

"So it is! How easy!" at once exclaimed everybody.

"Well, it's very good indeed," said Stouter, as soon as it was explained to him. "Very ingenious, too, I declare. Ah, Wippermann should have been here. He's the man for poetry, I can tell you. I think I told you, ma'am, what a capital story I know about him."

"I believe you did," was the lady's reply. Then endeavouring to assume as sarcastic an expression as she possibly could, she said, "Perhaps you will be so good as to relate it now, Mr. Stouter, and with your eloquence and other natural qualities, I have no doubt that, in the bard's own words, even these admirable puzzles will have to pale their intellectual fire before your recitation."

After coughing for a few seconds, and tugging once or twice at his waistcoat, as if his voice was at the top of his head, and he wished by sheer force to cause it to descend, Mr. Stouter began as follows :—

The Bewitched Leg of Pork;

or,

A Fair Exchange no Robbery.

Of all the men I ever knew, no one had so keen a relish for a practical joke as old Karl Wippermann, the urn-manufacturer, of Snow Hill. His German guttural laugh and nasal snort, as he chuckled over the success of one, denoted the extreme enjoyment it gave him. And yet there was not a particle of ill-nature in his freaks; they surprised and amused by their eccentricity, but they injured no one. When he left his counting-house to join his daughter's little tea-parties, his appearance was hailed as the coming of a "lord of misrule;" it seemed to give birth to and sanction fun. In vain did his daughter deprecatingly exclaim, "Father! dear father!" the spirits of her young friends were under the control of a more powerful influence than hers, and it generally ended by the lady herself being the loudest laugher of the circle. Indeed, I always suspected that a portion of the *vis comica* was inherited by her, for, though I knew her intimately, as Miss Wippermann in "single blessedness" till she was more than forty, a more cheerful companion I have seldom associated with. It was from her lips that I learnt the following story, which so completely illustrates the character of the old urn-manufacturer, and which is, besides, every word of it true.

On a fine spring morning, some twenty years ago, three respectable citizens, accompanied by a stout lad carrying a basket, were trudging in social chat along the Green Lanes, leading from Newington Green to Hornsey,

Winchmore Hill, and Southgate. To the lovers of Izaak Walton this party must suggest a nearly similar one, which, many years before, walked along the next parallel road to the right, on their way to Tottenham. But our travellers had no piscator or venator among them: they were three parish officers making the performance of a duty as pleasurable as they could. A portion of the charity children of St. Sepulchre's were placed at nurse or at board at Southgate, and these three gentlemen, the churchwarden and two overseers, were going to see whether the persons who undertook the charge performed their duty.

In those days there were not only no omnibuses or railroads, there was not a public conveyance of any kind to Southgate. In addition to this, a churchwarden and overseers were much more homely in their habits than such grandees are now-a-days. Such a visit now would be made in a comfortable carriage, and furnish a good pretext for a handsome dinner, followed by generous wine.

I do not say there may not be good walkers at the present day, but the facilities for locomotion are so great, that the place we wish to arrive at is the object, and we look for little pleasure in the transit. For my part, so dearly do I love those Green Lanes, and so fondly do I cherish the recollection of them, that I would rather, if blessed with health and strength, walk from Newington Green to Southgate, than travel the distance in the safest and most rapid rail-carriage. As the road leads to no great town, it is less built upon than any other at the same distance from London, and Southgate and its neighbourhood, with its splendid trees, the finest I ever saw, form one of the most charming localities within a walk for the Londoner. I may be told that the "New River" (or the "Myddelton," as it ought to be called) is but a canal; but it is a delightful object, twining along,

like a snake, through the green meadows. Between London and Southgate the traveller crosses the tiny but nicely-kept stream seven times.

Well, as was the practice, our parish officers, of whom Karl Wippermann was the chief, were going, without sending notice, to visit the poor children. It was the custom to pack a joint of meat, which was, on this occasion, a fine leg of mutton, in a basket, which was carried by an apprentice of one of the party, and was cooked at the "Cherry Tree," the house they patronized during their examinations. The ale, which constituted their sole beverage, they had on former visits found to be excellent.

A merrier walk can scarcely be imagined. The sun, the green fields, the flowers, the air, seemed to elevate spirits that seldom stood in need of a stimulus; and not a passenger, a child, or even an animal crossed their path, without a good-humoured salutation, or a jocular remark from the cheerful, open-hearted old German.

When they reached the "Queen's Head," a decent public-house standing on the left hand, near the five-mile stone, beneath the lovely Hornsey hills, the leader stopped short.

"Dis valking and talking, togeder vid de fresh country air, make a man both hongry and dry," exclaimed he. "Vat say you to a snap of pread and sheese, and a mug of goot aile?"

"Nothing could be better," replied his companions in a breath.

In they marched, then (as was the fashion of the house), straight into the kitchen, which was used as a room of public entertainment. At that hour of the day there were no other guests but our four travellers. The bread and cheese, backed by a pot of foaming ale, were placed upon the table, and they proceeded to the discussion of them with good appetites. A large saucepan was on the fire, and when they had nearly finished their snap, the

landlady made her appearance with a most delicious-looking small leg of salted pork in a dish. With, "I hope I don't disturb you, gentlemen," she took the lid off the saucepan, carefully deposited the leg of pork in it, replaced the lid, and retired, as if she thought the gentlemen did not want her company.

Karl Wippermann's attention was attracted more by the leg of pork than by the landlady, although she was a comely dame about forty. His eyes twinkled, as they always did when he contemplated a joke; and, as soon as she was gone, he set down his glass, and in a subdued voice, said to his overseers,—

"I say, vich do you like pest, mutton or pork?"

"Well," rejoined one of them, "I like good mutton, or we would not have chosen a leg for our dinner to-day; but I never saw such a tempting leg of pork as that the landlady has just put into the pot."

"Ah! vell! you go den and stand vid your back to de door, and I vill perform seme magic."

So saying, he unpacked his basket, took the leg of mutton out, and deliberately made it change places with the leg of pork. The lid of the pot being replaced, and his basket repacked: "Vell, now I tink ve vill go," said he, and placing the boy with his basket so as to be screened by the three men, they paid their reckoning, and proceeded quickly on their walk, afraid to indulge in the laugh which was ready to burst from all, till they were out of hearing of the publican's wife. The poor boy had the greatest difficulty; the fun of the thing almost choked him. When they had relieved themselves by a really good guffaw:—

"Vell!" said Karl, "it is no robbery, it is put a fair exchange; our leg of mutton veighs two or tree pounds more dan dere leg of pork, and mutton is dearer dan pork."

After satisfying their consciences with this "flattering

unction," they trudged on cheerfully to Southgate. Particular directions were given about the peas-pudding and turnips that were to form the accessories to their surreptitiously obtained joint; and when it was placed upon the table, its excellence proved an excuse for the trick they had played, while the latter seemed to add an additional condiment for the enjoyment of it.

So little was left of it, that there was nothing to pack in their basket; therefore when they had taken a full portion of the "Cherry Tree" ale, and smoked a corresponding number of pipes, they turned their faces once more towards London. The examination of the children, which had occupied the time while the pork was being cooked, I should have said, turned out quite satisfactorily.

They were cheerful on their outward journey; but homeward their humour was absolutely chirping. Surely few people have seldom laughed longer or louder than they did; but the exchange of the mutton for the pork was the prime jest of all.

When they approached the scene of their morning feat, Karl's two companions suggested that they should walk past quickly; but the ale had thoroughly roused the native spirit of fun in the old German, and he exclaimed,—

"Vat, de derfil! do you tink I can go by vidout tasting anoder cup of dat goot voman's aile? Let de poy hide his pasket in yonder ditch, behind dat bush, and come along vit me."

Half amused, half frightened, his companions followed him.

"Vell, mistress," he exclaimed, "your aile is so good, ve cannot pass de door vidout having anoder taste of it; a humming quart, if you please."

The ale was brought, but there was a constraint in all but old Karl, that seemed to imply that they must drink it as quickly as they could. He absolutely appeared to

trifle with it, and to try to provoke discovery. After he had smacked his lips at the first tumbler,—

"Mistress!" said he, "yours is a capital air, no vonder you look so buxom; it makes people qvite hongry; have you any cold meat in de house?"

He used to say that he should never forget his two companions as he asked this question: they started, and seemed ready to bolt out of the house; even the boy, who had so much enjoyed the fun of the change, looked alarmed.

"Cold meat, sir!" said the woman; "yes, we have cold meat enough; but I don't know that I should offer it to Christian gentlemen. It is bewitched; I don't know what to call it."

"Bevitched! nonsense!" said Karl; "vat do you mean by bevitched?"

"I'll tell you, sir. My husband, at Barnet Fair, bought a nice little pig, which he brought home in his taxed cart. We keep a cow, sir; so, with the spare milk and a little meal, we made it soon fat; and as Squire Gray, on the Hill, likes delicate small pork, we killed it about nine stone. We had but little of it for ourselves; but one of the legs I salted, after the manner taught me by my dear old mother in Berkshire, and beautiful it looked! Well, sir, this morning, with my own blessed hands, I put it into the saucepan on that fire. At dinner-time my husband and the boys came in from out-door work, all expecting a treat. The cloth was laid. I knew how long it would take boiling; so I placed the dish upon the table, and lifted the lid of the pot. I never shall forget it, sir! I don't think I shall ever get over it!—for, when I lifted it out of the pot, it was changed to a leg of mutton!"

"Mein goot voman! vat a tale! It is some trick of your husband vid de butcher!"

"Oh, no, sir! My husband was as much frightened as

I was. I screamed out, and let the bewitched meat fall; for bewitched it certainly was, as no human hands could have turned salted pork into fresh mutton."

"Vell, put how did it eat?"

"Eat, sir! Why, do you expect we could touch bewitched meat? No; no knife has been put into it. We had a bread-and-cheese dinner; and there it stands in the cupboard, and the foolish children have been several times to look if the witch who changed it had fetched it away."

"Vell," said old Karl, "you make me tink I am back in my own country of Yarmany. Put, mistress, as ve have more to do vith vitches in Yarmany than you have here, ve know how to deal vid dem; so, pring out your bedeifelled leg of pork or mutton, and ve vill try vat it is made of."

The leg of mutton was brought out, knives and forks, and plates laid, and the German exorcist proceeded to work, amidst the awful attention of the woman and her two boys. He began by muttering a few of the harshest German words he could recollect; then he waved the knife in a flourish over the doubtful meat, and, after making two or three mysterious niches in the outer part, he boldly cut into the tempting joint. As a boiled leg of mutton should never be cut till it is cold, if meant to be eaten cold, this proved delicious, with all its gravy in it. The people of the house eyed them wistfully as they ate; but, strange to say, they did not entertain the least suspicion that they had been concerned in the metamorphosis. Wippermann said so much in praise of the meat, that he entertained no doubt the family would venture upon the bewitched joint when they were gone.

This was a substantial afternoon "beeveur," as it used to be called before tea came into fashion, after the enjoyment of which they trudged merrily home; and with all the four, the transformation of the leg of pork, in the

words of Shakespeare, proved "argument for a week, laughter for a month, and a good jest for ever."

"Very good indeed!" shouted Mr. Jones, patting the eloquent Stouter on the back.

"Yes, I like it myself," authoritatively remarked his wife; "but I must say, I don't think your friend Mr. Wippermann acted according to the principles of strict honesty in effecting the change he did; for, although some poet has said that a fair exchange is no robbery, yet, as pork is at present one farthing a pound dearer than mutton, I am of opinion that the gentleman should have made the landlady some slight pecuniary atonement for the trick he played upon her."

"Honesty has long since left this world," sighed Warble.

"It was right enough, ma'am, I can tell you," replied Mr. Stouter. "Karl Wippermann was one of the most liberal fellows in the world, and wouldn't have done a shabby act to save his life. Why, see what a treat he gave to the charity children just before he left office. Shall I tell you about that, ma'am?"

"Not at present, thank you," replied Mrs. Jones, majestically.

"Talking about pork," said Mr. Flutter, starting up from his long silence,—"what is the difference between a rash speculation and a rasher of bacon?"

"You muff!" shouted Plastic, hitting him on the back. "Don't you see you gave the answer in the question?—one is a rash, and the other is a rasher. But I have a good one for you on the same subject. Why is a pig the most wonderful animal in the farm-yard?"

"Ah! if Wippermann had been here, he'd have told you that at once," said Mr. Stouter. "What a man he was for riddles, to be sure."

"He's almost like Mrs. Harris, I declare," remarked Mrs. Jones.

"So he ought to be, ma'am; because, you see, Mrs. Harris was a connexion of his family. She called on me one day when I was in office, and told me then that her cousin's sister was also cousin to Wippermann's brother-in-law's nephew; so they are almost related, you see."

"Yes, very nearly," said Jack Plastic, winking. "But come, about this riddle,—why is a pig the most wonderful animal in the farm-yard? Do you give it up? Well then, look here—it's because he's killed first and cured afterwards."

At this there was a general titter, culminating in a loud guffaw on the part of Mr. Jones, who then asked his wife if the guests had not better have a glass of wine.

"Directly, my dear," said Mrs. Jones, smiling, but at the same time greatly annoyed at the question. "I want to have another puzzle first."

"Here, Mrs. Jones, take this one," said Plastic, suddenly starting up from a delightful chat he had been enjoying with Polly Armstrong, during which he had endeavoured to let her see how deep an impression she had made upon him; while Emily, buoyed up by hope's flattering tale, persuaded herself that Plastic only talked to Miss Armstrong because he felt that it was his duty to do so, when all the time he would infinitely have preferred to talk to her.

"Now, ladies and gentlemen!" said Mrs. Jones, who evidently enjoyed her part as show-woman, "while you study the puzzle, I have no doubt but that Miss Bessie Gilpin will favour us with a song. Will you? Thank you." Bessie at once made her way to the piano, followed by Harry, and sang a charming song to the effect that the beating of her own heart was the only sound she heard; but had she only been listening, she might not only have heard the animated conversation which took place between Emily and Jack Plastic, but also the thumping of Harry's heart, as well as the sighs which that young gentleman

heaved as the eloquence of the young lady's tone thrilled through him, and made him inwardly yearn for the time when he should be able to offer her his hand, heart, and the etceteras that usually go with them, to the fair cantatrice. Mrs. Jones, after conversing with her neighbour for a short time on the advantages derived from administering a periodical dose of physic to young children, was soon lost in a deep calculation as to the number of glasses of wine (thanks to her husband's stupid question) that would be required before supper. The good lady had fully intended not to produce any wine before that time; for although her guests would probably note its absence, they were sure to assume that Mrs. Jones had forgotten it, and thus the wine would be saved, and no suspicion of stinginess could possibly attach itself to the hostess. Mr. Warble, who felt rather annoyed at not being asked to sing the moment he entered the room, had sufficiently recovered his amiability to chat with Jane Gilpin, and was endeavouring to persuade her that in this world no two things could possibly be alike. "For instance," said he, "take two circles traced by a compass. They cannot possibly be alike, for the compass is more worn each time it is used." Jane said it was very clever, and that she could not argue the point. It soon became so evident that he relished her conversation, that Miss Tozer felt bound to nudge Jack Plastic confidentially once or twice, and looking over her right shoulder, she uttered the words "A case," in such an innocent and careless manner as would have led a stranger to believe that she herself was a perfect stranger to the all-devouring flame of love. When the song was concluded, and Bessie was led back to her seat by Harry, who had, in accordance with the customs of the polite world, turned over the leaves of the song at the wrong place for the young lady, Mrs. Jones, in order to divert for a time public attention from the subject of wine, again requested attention to the new puzzle, which, she said,

embodied a speech or ode by Orlando in the "Tempest;" but as none of her visitors could unravel more of the mystery than that the word in the corner was *maketh*, she was obliged to come to their assistance, and at once informed them that the answer was "Praising what is lost, maketh the remembrance dear."

This suggested to Flutter a riddle, which he asked thus "What tooth is like Long Acre?"

"No, no, Flutter; you mean what street is a decayed tooth like? and the answer is Long Acre."

"Ah, that is it," said poor Flutter, somewhat disconcerted. "I don't know how it is, but I never can remember riddles. Oh, never mind! I'll read my collection at supper, and then you'll see that I have some capital ones for you."

"What is that large photograph, ma'am?" now asked Mr. Stouter.

"Oh, that's the Bridge of Sighs, sir, which Mr. Jones and I saw during our wedding trip."

"There, that's just like those foreigners. Call that a bridge of size, indeed; why I'll back London bridge against it any day of the week."

As politeness forbade the visitors to laugh at this sad display of ignorance, it was fortunately received in silence.

And, now, at the request of the hostess, Jack Plastic came out in a more prominent character than heretofore, and at once made preparations for the performance of some conjuring tricks.

He first took his place behind a little table, which stood at one end of the room. After ranging the contents of his blue-bag upon it, he began as follows:—

"I shall now, ladies and gentlemen, have the honour of submitting a few little tricks, which in most instances I shall perform by sleight of hand. I need scarcely tell you that I shall only feel too happy if you discover any of the illusions which I pass before you. All that you

SHAKESPEARIAN PUZZLE, No. 2.

have to do is to watch me: if your eyes are quicker than my hands, you will assuredly see through my artifices; but if, on the contrary, my hands are quicker than your eyes, I shall puzzle and at the same time, I hope, amuse you. Now, then, to begin.

"Will any gentleman lend me two handkerchiefs? Mr. Flutter will oblige, I am sure; and Mr. Stouter. Thank you. You see I have here two shillings in my hand. Well, then, one of these I place in Mr. Stouter's handkerchief. Don't be alarmed, my dear sir. I won't damage your handkerchief."

"No, mind you don't," said that gentleman; "for it is one that Wippermann gave me."

"*Toujours cet* Wippermann," whispered Mrs. Jones to her neighbour.

Mrs. Jones was very fond of using her French whenever occasion offered itself.

"Now, having deposited one shilling in Mr. Stouter's beautiful bandana, I place it in a hat. Dear me, I want a hat. Will Mr. Flutter oblige?"

"Oh, yes, you may have mine, although it is not a very good one; for I dare say that the felt *felt* the blow it received as I came upstair. Ha! ha!"

The hat was brought, and Jack Plastic having placed the handkerchief in it, continued,—

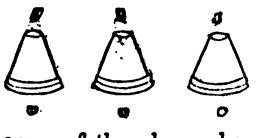
"I now take the other shilling, and ask my friend Mr. Flutter to lay his handkerchief over it. Please, hold the shilling between your finger and thumb, while I twist the handkerchief up. Now, sir," continued Jack, holding one corner of the handkerchief, "please, drop the shilling when I count three."

Mr. Flutter did so. The conjurer at the same time whisked the handkerchief into the air, but no shilling fell on the floor.

Flutter could not make it out at all. His surprise was considerably increased when, at Jack's request, he drew

the other handkerchief out of the hat, at the bottom of which lay the two shillings. We believe that this excellent trick is performed in the following manner.

Borrow two coloured silk handkerchiefs from the company, and have *three* shillings in your hand, but only show *two*, keeping the other one firmly fixed against the first joint of the second and third fingers. You must also have a fine needle and thread stuck inside the cuff of your coat. Then take one of the handkerchiefs, and put in *both* shillings, but pretend that only *one* is in the handkerchief; then put the handkerchief into a hat, leaving one corner hanging out. Now hold up the *third* shilling (which the spectators imagine is the *second*), and ask one of the company to lay the second handkerchief over it. You then ask him to hold the shilling tight between his finger and thumb, while you twist up the handkerchief. While doing so, with both hands concealed under the handkerchief, you pass a few stitches under the shilling, and replace the needle. This being done, spread one corner of the handkerchief over the hand of the person who is still holding the shilling, and, taking hold of another corner, tell him to drop the shilling when you have counted three. At the word "three" he lets go the shilling, and you whisk the handkerchief into the air, when the shilling appears to have vanished, but is really held in the handkerchief. You then tell the astonished individual to draw the other handkerchief out of the hat, by the corner that is hanging out. The two shillings are heard to fall into the hat, and every one is persuaded that you have conjured one of the shillings out of a person's hand, and sent it into the hat.



The wizard then showed the trick of the three cups, the secret of which we have also acquired. You get three tin cups, of the shape shown in the cut. They should

have two or three ridges running round them at the mouth, in order to give a better hold. Four balls should now be made of cork, and carefully blackened. One of the balls is held concealed between the roots of the third and fourth fingers, while the other three are handed round for examination, together with the cups. When they are returned, the young conjurer begins by placing each ball under a cup, or, if he chooses, asks one of the spectators to do so for him. While this is being done, he slips the fourth ball to the tips of the second and third fingers. He then lifts up cup No. 1, replacing it on the table a few inches from its first position, and at the same time slips the fourth ball under it. He takes up ball No. 1, and pretends to throw it away, but in reality he slips it into the place which the fourth ball had occupied. He does the same with the three cups, and then commences a sham search after the lost balls, in which he accidentally (!) knocks over one of the cups, and, to his pretended astonishment, finds a ball under it. He then knocks over both the other cups, and finds in them the two missing balls.

He again places the balls under the cups, taking care to slip the fourth ball under cup No. 3. He then takes up cup No. 1 and pretends to throw the ball into No. 3, but hides it as before. As there are already two balls in No. 3, the spectators imagine that he really has thrown the ball into it. He replaces cup No. 3 over both balls, and slips among them ball No. 1. He then takes up cup No. 2, and goes through the same process, and on knocking over cup No. 3 all three balls are found together under it, and while the spectators are being astonished ball No. 2 can be quickly got rid of.

A rather startling termination to this trick can be managed by taking up one of the cups with its mouth upwards, holding the finger and thumb close to its mouth. Then by throwing another cup into it, letting go the first

and catching the second, you appear to have thrown the second cup through the first.

Plastic next performed the following numerical tricks with great success. At first it must be admitted, however, that they hung fire a little, owing to the fact that Mrs. Jones, who undertook, *pro tem.*, to be the conjurer's foil, did not always calculate according to Cocker; but when Harry undertook to go through the arithmetical process, the tricks went off easily, and were admitted on all sides to have been a great success.

TO TELL TWO OR MORE NUMBERS THOUGHT OF.

If one or more of the numbers thought of be greater than 9, we must distinguish two cases,—that in which the number of the figures thought of is *odd*, and that in which it is *even*. In the first case, ask the sum of the first and second, of the second and third, of the third and fourth, and so on to the last, and then the sum of the first and last. Having written down all these sums in order, you add together all those the *places* of which are all *odd*, as the first, third, fifth, &c.; make another sum of those the places of which are *even*, as the second, fourth, sixth, &c.; subtract this sum from the former, and the remainder will be the double of the first number. Let us suppose, for example, that the following numbers are thought of, viz., 3, 7, 13, 17, 20, which, when added two and two together, as above, give 10, 20, 30, 37, 23; the sum of the first, third, and fifth is 63, and that of the second and fourth is 57; 57 from 63 leaves 6, which is the double of the first number 3. Now if 3 be taken from 10, the first of these sums, the remainder, 7, will be the second number; if 7 be taken from 20, the second of the sums, the remainder, 13, will be the third number; and proceeding in this manner, we may find the rest. In the *second case*,—*i.e.*, if the number of the figures thought of

be even,—you must ask and write down as before the sum of the first and second, and so on; but instead of the *first* and last, you must take that of the *second* and last, then add those which stand in the even places, and form them into a new sum; add together, also, those in the odd places, the first excepted, and subtract this sum from the former; the remainder will be the double of the second number. If the second number thus found be taken from the sum of the first and second, the remainder, of course, will be the first number; and if it be taken from that of the second and third, it will give the third; and so on of the rest. Let the figures thought of be, for example, 3, 7, 13, 17; the sums formed as above would be 10, 20, 30, 24; the sum of the second and fourth (of these latter numbers) is 44, from which if 30 (the third) be subtracted, the remainder will be 14, which is the double of 7, the second number: the first, therefore, is 3, the third 13, and the fourth 17. When *each* of the numbers thought of does not exceed 9, they may be easily found in the following manner:—Having made the person add 1 to the double of the first number thought of, desire him to multiply the whole by 5, and to add to the product the second number. If there be a third, make him double this first sum, and add 1 to it; after which desire him to multiply the new sum by 5, and add to it the third number. If there be a fourth, proceed in the same manner, desiring him to double the preceding sum, to add 1 to it, to multiply by 5, to add the fourth number, and so on. Then ask for the sum arising from the addition of the last number thought of: if there were two numbers, subtract 5 from it; if three, 55; if there were four, 555; and so on: the remainder will be composed of figures of which the first on the left will be the first thought of, the next the second, and so on. Suppose the figures thought of to be 3, 4, 6; by adding 1 to the double of the first, we shall have 7, which being multiplied by 5, will

produce 35. If 4, the second number thought of, be added, we shall have 39, which doubled gives 78; and if we add 1, and multiply 79 (the sum) by 5, the result will be 395. In the last place, if we add 6, the last number thought of, the sum will be 401; and if 55 be deducted from it, we shall have for the remainder 346, the figures of which, 3, 4, 6, indicate in order the numbers thought of.

THE REJECTED FIGURE.

Inform one of the company that you will give him a sum set down on a piece of paper, that he may multiply it by whatever number he pleases, and strike a figure out of the product, and that you will tell him what figure he has struck out. In order to do this trick, first observe that the figures composing the sum do not exceed 18.

Suppose the sum you gave him was 132354
and suppose he chooses to be the multiplier 7

926478

Presume, also, that the figure which has been struck out is the 6; the remaining ones will form a sum of 92478. After the person has performed the multiplication, and has struck out a figure, bid him to give you the remaining ones on a slip of paper. When he does this, add the figures together, and divide the sum by 9. If it divides evenly, 0 will be the figure struck out; if not, subtract the remainder from 9, and the result will be the figure struck out. In the case before us, the total of the remaining figures, viz. 92478, is 30, which, divided by 9, gives 3 times and 3 over; subtract this 3 from 9, and it gives 6, which is the figure struck out.

THE GUESSING OF NUMBERS.

In this trick a person may think of several numbers, but each of them must be less than 10. Suppose, then, that a person thinks of 3, 6, 8, and 2. Now proceed in

this manner :—tell him to double the first number, which gives 6; add 5 to it, which makes 11; multiply this by 5, which makes 55; add 10, and you have 65; let the person then add the second number, which in this case will give 71; multiply it by 10, which makes 710; then add the third number; this gives 718; multiply by 10, and it makes 7180; add the remaining number, and the total sum will be 7182. Now ask the person who has done this multiplication to give you the final sum on a piece of paper; from this always subtract 3500, and the remainder will be the separate numbers thought of. In this case 3500 from 7182 leaves 3682, which are the numbers thought of.

Then followed the doll trick, which was so very successful that Mr. Plastic was unanimously requested to perform it a second time, which he did with great success.

This was his *modus operandi* :—

Get a comical-looking doll, and cut off his head diagonally, taking care to do it very neatly. Drive a peg into the neck, and bore a hole into the body, into which the peg fits, as in the cut. Paint his body and head carefully, and if you put a gold chain or two round his neck it will conceal the line of junction. Make also a coat of silk, and sow a pocket inside the edge of the skirt.

Take up the doll, and say, "Now, ladies and gentlemen, here is a very learned man. Observe the development of his forehead, the sagacity of his nose, the eloquence of his lips, the dignity of his spectacles, and the philosophy of his pigtail. He is Professor of Astronomy at Timbuctoo, and here is his gown of office. See how handsome he looks in it. He is going to Amsterdam to see the eclipse of the last new

comet. He has the honour to wish you all farewell before starting on his journey. Now, Professor, we are waiting to see you go. Oh, you want funds, do you? I beg your pardon; here is a shilling for you." So saying, you take your right hand from under the gown, taking with it the body, and put the body into your pocket, while you jingle some silver. The head is now supported by your left hand. Pretend to give him some money, and then say, "What! you won't go unless you have more! Get along!" Hit the head a hard rap with your right hand, which drives it into the pocket, which you hold open for it with your left thumb and little finger. "Oh dear! the professor is dead, and cannot be found." Saying this, you grasp the gown by the place where the head is, and shake it about to show that it is empty. If you like, you can make another oration and hold a dialogue, making the professor resuscitate himself, which is of course done by taking the head out of the pocket with the left hand and working it about by the peg.

The next deception was practised with a pack of cards which Plastic had brought in his bag. He first asked Mr. Flutter to draw a card, and after holding the pack behind his back, he requested Mr. Flutter to replace the card on the top. Then, after shuffling the pack, he held it up with the faces towards the audience, and asked Timothy if the bottom card was his. On receiving a negative answer, he gave the pack to Mr. Flutter, who shuffled them well, and then returned them to the conjurer, who performed the same operation; and lo! on holding them up again, the very card Mr. Flutter had chosen—the ace of hearts—was at the bottom.

Miss Tozer next took a card, replaced it on the top, and then returned the pack to Mr. Plastic to be shuffled. When he had done so, the young lady shuffled them in her turn, and again returned them to the conjurer, who quietly placed them under a hat, and then, throwing down

card after card till he got rid of about a dozen, suddenly stopped, and told her that the last card was the one she had chosen.

"So it is; well, I declare!" exclaimed the amazed young lady, and then most of the people said, "Well, I never did!" which was very probable, and then expressed their approbation by loud applause. Mr. Plastic now wound up his short entertainment by appearing in the character of a fire-eater, and putting a piece of tow in his mouth, chewed it, and appeared to swallow it. He then placed a second handful in it, and lo! instantly smoke issued from his mouth, the interior of which was lighted up with a glow. If the people were surprised at the other tricks, the last one perfectly astounded them, and it was some time before they all recovered their self-possession, particularly Emily, who told the conjurer that she was so alarmed lest he might have burnt himself.

Mr. Stouter—such a rude man, to be sure—here told Jones, that the hearty applause he had just bestowed upon the conjurer had made him very thirsty, and that if it did not make much difference he should like something to drink.

It was some time before the host could muster up sufficient courage to give his wife a second hint on the subject; but at length he felt bold enough to tell her that his friend Stouter would like a glass of wine.

"Very well, Mr. Jones, the wine shall be brought in as soon as the table is cleared. Perhaps, however, in the meanwhile Mr. Warble will oblige us with a song?"

William Warble, we must here state, thought that one song in an evening was all that people ought to expect from him, and as he knew he should have to go through some songs in the little drawing-room play at the end of the evening, he considered that it was very improper of Mrs. Jones to expect him to furnish any more entertainment that evening.

"'Pon my word, Mrs. Jones," said he, "I am afraid that you must excuse me this once. I am indeed suffering under a violent catarrh."

"We'll tune the light guitar!" at once exclaimed the incorrigible Flutter.

"Oh, yes, now that you are here, you must sing," said the hostess.

"But, madam, suppose I deny that I am here. It is impossible for any mortal to say I am, for each day he changes, and is nearer death; therefore the man who was Warble seven years ago, does not possess at the present time an inch of the same body, and is therefore somebody else."

"Oh, Mr. Warble! Your arguments are too obtuse for a woman to combat."

"Come now, Mr. Warble," said Miss Tozer, persuasively; "you must sing; do, now, for my sake."

"For your sake I would do almost anything," replied Mr. Warble, with about as much sincerity as the lady felt who addressed him.

"Ah, why doesn't she speak to me like that?" thought Timothy Flutter, "I'd do more than that for her sweet sake, I would."

"Well, then, I'll sing you something," said Mr. Warble; "but in the meantime, Mrs. Jones, please to show us another of those very entertaining puzzles."

The cardboard was exhibited in front of the looking-glass, and while the visitors were endeavouring to decipher it, Mr. Warble sang the following ditty in a tone full of emotion and deep feeling:—

NAN OF HORSELYDOWN.*

WHERE cocoas lift their tufted heads,†
And orange blossoms scent the breeze,
'Tis there the wild Mulatto weds,
And moves with soft and graceful ease:
Tho' I have seen her witching smiles,
Still have I kept all passion down;
For how could I forget the wiles
Of my sweet Nan of Horselydown?
Of my sweet Nan of Horselydown?

At night 'tween decks our yarns we spin,
And talk of our own girls at home,
And say, if once their arms within,
We never more abroad would roam.
Jim praises Meg of Wapping Fair,
While Stepney Bet is praised by Joe,
And I praise Nan from top to toe,
For which Tom calls me love-sick lown.
But then he ne'er saw girl so fair
As my sweet Nan of Horselydown,
As my sweet Nan of Horselydown.

Oh! when we reach the crowded pier,
And our broad yards are quickly mann'd;
Oh! should my own true girl appear,
And sweetly smile or wave her hand;
With ardent soul I'll spring on shore,
And, scorning dull decorum's frown,
To my fond bosom o'er and o'er
I'll press my Nan of Horselydown,
I'll press my Nan of Horselydown.

* The words of this song are by Joseph Durham, Esq., F.S.A.
† See Rushton's Poems.

After the rapturous applause which greeted the conclusion of the song had subsided, general attention was directed to the annexed puzzle, and in a very short period Harry, who had been aided in his conjecture by Bessie Gilpin, gave out the following as the answer:—

"You do but bar the door upon your own liberty if you deny your griefs to your friend."

Mrs. Jones felt rather annoyed that the puzzle was so easily guessed; and as she was convinced that Harry must be too bashful, and, for the matter of that, too stupid to be able to tell a story, she at once requested him to amuse the company with a lively narrative, "after which," said she, "we will all have a nice glass of wine."

"Ah, that's right!" shouted old Stouter, delighted at the prospect of having something to drink at last. "Now then, Harry, my boy, tell us a good story."

"But I don't know one," was Harry's reply.

"What!" exclaimed Mrs. Jones, with an assumed look of surprise, "a boy of nineteen, and not able to tell a short story. Come, now, Harry, you must tell us something, or we shall begin to think you are not so clever, after all."

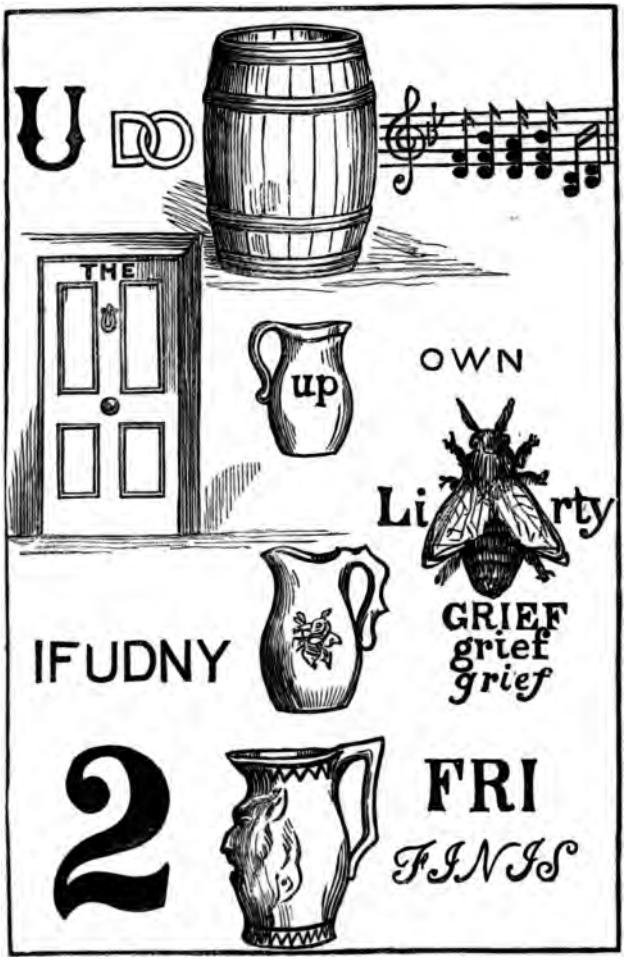
The tone in which this speech was uttered goaded Harry to the quick. To be called a boy, and to be twitted with his ignorance before Bessie too,—oh, it was too much! He must tell them something. So, after reflecting for a minute, he started up and expressed his intention of giving an account of a party that took place at his school the last Half he was there.

This proposal having been heartily welcomed, he began thus:—

THE PARTY AT OUR SCHOOL.

At last all was settled, and it was definitely arranged that our party was to take place on the 11th December, just four days before the Christmas holidays. What a fuss there was in the school, to be sure, as the day approached! The boys became neglectful of play, and,

SHAKESPEARIAN PUZZLE No. 3.



instead of taking healthy exercise in the playground, gathered in small groups to discuss the approaching event.

In short, as the day appointed for the party drew near, great preparations were made on all sides for the long-expected ball. All the boys suddenly seemed seized with the idea that the clothes in which they had lately fancied themselves "noble swells" had become seedy, and that new suits were absolutely necessary, in order that the dignity of the school might be correctly sustained in their own sweet persons. Consequently most of the play-time was occupied in trying on new garments, being measured for dress-boots, and in furbishing up the entire available stock of jewellery, in which article some of them came out very strong. Foremost in the group was a boy named Courcy—*the* swell of the school,—who always brought back more money than any of the lads. He was, however, not at all popular, as he was very fond of teasing the little boys in every way he could possibly think of. Courcy fully intended to cut a figure, and determined that his get-up should be as elegant as his parents' purse and his own good taste could render it. Another lad, named Brown—a jolly, good-tempered fellow—was also very nice in his preparations, and the moment the date of the party was fixed, he determined in his own mind to come out very strong, and, as he expressed it, "to fascinate all the girls."

Well, at length the evening of the party came, although many of the boys declared that the days elapsing between the invitation and the event were of much longer duration than usual. The boys, all looking as trim and nice as new clothes and copious ablutions and cosmetics could make them, assembled in the school-room at half-past eight, there to await the message which should usher them into the sacred precincts of the drawing-room and the delightful presence of the twenty young ladies, composing the select seminary of Miss Burchem, who were

always invited, in order that the smaller boys might be able to indulge in the luxury of partners of their own size. Soon a pompous waiter stalked upstairs, and informed us that Mr. and Mrs. Hastings requested the pleasure of the company of the gentlemen of the first class, all of whom at once started off and trotted down into the drawing-room, halting every now and then to see that every item of their costume was adjusted. Arrived in the room, they shook hands with Mr. Hastings and his wife, and were then requested to parade through the suite of rooms, halting on their journey to imbibe mild refreshments, in the shape of coffee and—a luxury to a schoolboy—elegant pieces of thin bread-and-butter. The other classes were each separately introduced, and requested to perform the same evolutions; but in a short time it was discovered that, instead of following their instructions to the letter, they one and all took possession of the tea-room, and made preparations to enjoy a hearty meal; and this indeed they did with such good effect that the waiters began to find the stock of coffee run short, and many of the boys became distressingly convinced that their waistcoats were new, and not quite so elastic as might have been desired.

So full and crowded did the room become, that Mr. Hastings was absolutely compelled to turn all his *alumni* out of the apartment, and request them to seek fresh scenes of enjoyment, much to the disgust of several young gentlemen, who, in consequence of the voracious appetites of their comrades, had been quite unable to see the refreshment-table, much less taste anything that was on it. The whole tribe then wandered into the dancing-room, and ranged themselves along one side of the apartment, opposite to where the twenty young ladies were seated, looking very demure, and showing a great exuberance of curls and white tarlatan. By this time many of the guests had arrived, and the juvenile crowd was

broken up into small groups of family parties, for the brothers and sisters of many of the boys were usually asked to the annual entertainment. The elder boys of the school wandered uneasily about the room, endeavouring to look as unconcerned as possible, and also attempting to impress the strangers with the fact that they were young *men*, and not the boys of the school. These lofty aspirations were, however, often nipped in the bud by small boys rushing up and saluting them by their Christian names, or by such questions as, "I say, this is better than lessons, ain't it, old fellow?" or, "What time shall we have to get up to-morrow, do you think?"

None felt the humiliating nature of such queries more deeply than Brown, whose get-up was altogether so unexceptionable, that he felt morally convinced it was a perfect impossibility for any one to imagine that he was a schoolboy.

His hair was more untidy than polls usually are at evening parties. But then Brown's hair seemed differently constituted to that of any one else. No persuasion of Macassar, bear's grease, and hair-oil could induce the crinitory particles to lie flat. They firmly endeavoured to emulate one of the good qualities of their owner—by being as upright as possible. The tail-coat, a garment which was a highly important adjunct in endowing this ambitious youth with an air of manly dignity, had been supplied by his elder brother, who finding an old one lying idle in his drawer, had kindly loaned it for the evening to his brother Adolphus. Brown, however, had to deal with an obstructive pair of gloves, into which he vainly endeavoured to induct his digits thoroughly. In fact, all through the evening Brown never succeeded in getting rid of a vacuum of about half an inch at the end of his fingers.

By slow and painful degrees the boys began to cast off that shyness with which they are too often invested when

engaged in conversation with the fair sex, and the dancing became general. Almost all the boys danced, and seemed to enjoy it. One of the lads, however, a very corpulent youth, had ensconced himself in a state of repletion, at the beginning of the evening, in a chair in the refreshment-room, and scarcely stirred once. And where was the swell Courcy? He never danced. For two reasons: first, because he could not; and second, because he never could say a word to his partner. In truth, he was employed in a deed of darkness, the perpetration of which he had long contemplated; so when the merriment of the party was at its height, he stealthily crept up to the school-room, and seizing hold of a large inkstand, threw its contents over the printed Rules of the school, which he then tore down, and placed in Brown's desk,—who, we may mention, had a few days previously prevented him from bullying a little boy; after which black deed he returned to the dancing-room.

At supper, that absurd custom, speech-making, was so largely indulged in, that I cannot refrain from introducing some of the most notable specimens.

About a quarter of an hour had elapsed since the commencement of operations, when an old gentleman, rejoicing in the name of Snow, suddenly became very uneasy, and began crumbling his bread in a very insane manner, and pulling at his stock as if he felt that the good things he had swallowed had stuck in his throat, and that he was on the eve of being choked. At last affairs reached a climax. He beckoned to a waiter, and told him to touch Mr. Hastings. After the manner of waiters in general, that worthy just placed his hand on Mr. Hastings' shoulder, who, naturally thinking that some more wine was wanted, said to him, "Look under the sideboard." But when the waiter quietly suggested that Mr. Snow requested his attention, Mr. Hastings at once turned his head to where glittered like the setting sun the red face of one who called

himself "Plain John Snow, sir, and not ashamed of his name." His friends called him *very plain* John Snow; but we must not delay commencing his oration.

"Mr. Hastings, sir, I rise, with your permission, to propose a toast."

"Certainly, Mr. Snow," was the answer.

"Ladies and gentlemen, it is with feelings of extraordinary pleasure that I rise—that is, stand up—now—I mean, on the present occasion, to propose a health—no—a toast. Mr. Hastings, I may say, is a man who—that is who—who is, I mean—who is—who is, in short, a man. (Great cheering.) And I may say that, during the years he has known me—I mean, I have known him, he has done nothing to mitigate—I mean, to forfeit the confidence I indulge—that is repose—in him. I am not usually considered a good speaker, but the importance of the host—no—the toast—is enough to excite any one to terms of eloquence. I—that is—therefore—am sure—and when—Bah, bah! it's impossible to speak if that young gentleman opposite me persists in making a door-mat of my trousers. (Great laughter from everybody except the poor lad to whom attention had been so unceremoniously directed.) Not to detain you longer, gentlemen, I will simply say that the health I have to propose is the toast—that is, the host—no—the toast is the health—no, no—the health is the toast—I mean, that is—Mr. Hastings's very good health."

Mr. Hastings returned thanks in a becoming manner, and in a short time a modest-looking gentleman of the name of Mr. Hyacinth Jonquil, with long curly hair, blue eyes, and spectacles, proposed the health of the ladies, and requested Master Brown, who prided himself on being a good speech-maker, to return thanks for them.

That young man was indeed quite in his element when returning thanks for the ladies. So gracefully and effectively did he speak, that he was enabled to make his peace

with a young lady whom he had just before offended by asking her,—"Who is that ugly old crone, who looks more like a witch than a respectable member of society?" And in reply he was answered by the young lady that the old crone was her mamma.

And now for Master Brown's speech:—"Ladies and gentlemen,—unaccustomed as I am—no, I don't mean that—I deeply feel the honour you have done me by proposing my health—humph—no, that's wrong [something of a titter was now heard]. Well, then, look here, ladies and gentlemen. In returning thanks for the ladies, I rise and thank you, and I say it is a compliment, and a great compliment, and they are obliged—they are obliged—to have me to return thanks for them. What would to-night's amusement have been without the ladies, eh? Why, I say, if we had not had the ladies this evening we should—we should have been without them. But here they are. Are they not? And being here, we are all happy; and, therefore, as I have finished my speech, I will say no more except that I am obliged—very much obliged to you all."

The usual clatter of knives, forks, and spoons against the plates and the table greeted the termination of the speech, and then we returned to the drawing-room to dance again. Even the corpulent youth, under the influence of the general hilarity, ventured on a waltz, and got on pretty well for five minutes, when suddenly a giant of six feet three, with a sylphide in a capacious crinoline, bore down upon him, and with a sudden whirl of that mysterious garment, sent him spinning upon a gouty old gentleman's foot, whose anger for a time was something frightful to witness. So he gave up dancing, and proceeded to declare that nothing should induce him to make such a fool of himself again.

At last the company began to go, and at four o'clock, after the usual bustle and confusion attendant on the

breaking up of parties, and the invariable shouts of "Mr. or Mrs. So-and-So's carriage stops the way," all had cleared off, and we boys went to roost.

The next morning, to our surprise, we found, on entering the schoolroom, Mr. Hastings and all the other masters at their desks, and at once perceived from his looks that something serious had taken place.

As soon as we were all seated, Mr. Hastings rose and spoke thus:—"Gentlemen, I had hoped that such a feeling as ingratitude was almost unknown among you, but I regret to find that I was mistaken, for in return for all the trouble and pains Mrs. Hastings and I took to enable you to have a pleasant evening last night, one of the boys has committed an outrage quite monstrous in character. The printed copy of the Rules which up till the present time stood over the fireplace has vanished. (Instantly all the boys turned their heads towards the fireplace, and stared at the square place occupied by the Rules, as if they expected them to come through the wall.) One of you—I scarcely dare venture to think of the perpetrator—has had the effrontery to make away with this document; and as you have shown by this act that I need not be too considerate in dealing with you collectively, I shall at once have every desk searched, in the hope—a vain one I fear—of finding my Rules there concealed. Mr. Sauval, will you be good enough to look into all the boys' desks?"

The French master did as he was bid, and looked searchingly in each. Many boys expected—nay, some even hoped—that they would be found in Courcy's, for he was very unpopular in the school; but no—no Rules were there; and as the master closed the desk, Courcy looked around him with a satisfied air, as much as to say,—"now, find me out if you can."

On, on the master went, and nothing was found. He had already reached the last desk but one, and was just on the point of giving up the search as fruitless, when to his

surprise, on raising the lid, there lay the Rules all smeared with ink, and crumpled into a corner.

"Je les ai trouvés, monsieur," said he, sadly.

"In whose desk?" thundered Mr. Hastings.

"In that of Brown, sir," was the answer.

Poor Brown seemed as one transfixed. So stupefied was he for the moment that there he sat, his tongue stolidly refusing to do its office, his face pale as death.

"Brown, come here!" rang out the stern tones of the master's voice.

Mechanically he walked along the floor, all the boys gazing on him with looks of pity. Not till he reached Mr. Hastings's desk were his own feelings able to find vent. Almost flinging himself on the floor, he burst into a flood of tears, and in an agonizing voice, exclaimed,—

"Oh, sir! believe me, I did not do it. On my word of honour, sir, I assure you it was not I!"

Now, Mr. Hastings was a humane man, and from the earnest way in which Brown spoke, he felt almost convinced that he was telling the truth. He therefore said quietly to him,—

"Be calm. Now, tell me, how is it that the Rules were found in your desk?"

"I don't know, sir; indeed I don't."

"Humph! This is strong evidence against you. Did any boy see Brown in the schoolroom last night?"

No answer for a minute. Then Courcy rose and said,—"Sir, at eleven o'clock I met Brown coming out of the room, and one of his hands I noticed was smeared with ink."

"Please, sir, I put it in an inkstand by mistake, as I entered the room with my sister."

"Brown, I am afraid you are lying. I hope, for your sake, however, that I am mistaken. Nevertheless, these proofs are unimpeachable, and I must make an exception from my rule with regard to corporal punishment. I shall at once cane you."

The poor lad shrieked aloud, and many a boy turned round and glared at Courcy in a manner so defiant as to forebode mischief to him on the departure of the master.

Mr. Hastings opened his desk and took out a cane. He had just raised his hand to inflict the first blow on poor Brown's back, when the boy nearest the door suddenly stood up and shouted,—

"Rise for Mrs. Hastings."

The boys at once stood up, and Mr. Hastings stayed his hand, evidently surprised at this unexpected interruption.

"Sir," said the lady, as she entered the room, "I am sorry to see that you are going to cane a boy; and only hope that I am in time to save Brown from receiving a punishment due to another. I have just received a letter from Mr. Snow, the old gentleman who proposed our healths last night, in which he says that he should not be doing his duty were he not to expose a villanous deed committed by one of our boys. Here is the note."

Mr. Hastings took it, and read thus:—

"DEAR MADAM,—Last night, when wandering about your apartments, I suddenly thought I should like to see the schoolroom. On arriving there I was particularly struck with a beautifully printed copy of Rules hanging up, and resolved, as I was alone, to copy the initial R, which was most charmingly delineated thereon in Gothic characters. Retracing my steps to the dancing-room, in order to borrow a lead-pencil, I met a boy rushing quickly into the schoolroom. I quietly passed on; but I had not proceeded many steps further, being a slow walker, when he hurried passed me again, as pale as death, and with one hand covered with ink. He had a slight moustache, and looked about seventeen, and, as I noticed, wore a good deal of jewellery, and was very showily dressed."

By this time Brown had recovered his self-possession, and all the boys were looking easier except Courcy, who

was rapidly changing colour, and on whom more than one pair of eyes was directed, as if the owner had formed a tolerably accurate idea about his share in the transaction.

Mr. Hastings, continuing the perusal of the letter, read as follows :—

"I thought at once that the boy had been frightened at something he might have seen in the schoolroom, and therefore I at once rushed thither in order to discover if possible the cause of his alarm. Judge, sir, of my horror and surprise on seeing the beautiful copy of your Rules torn away from its usual position. A shred or two only remained to denote the spot where once it had stood. Your large inkstand I also noticed was lying on the floor close to the frame of the maltreated Regulations. Now, sir, as no boy was in the schoolroom when I first went there, and as on my second visit I also found myself alone, it stands to reason that the boy I met on the staircase must have been the perpetrator of this outrage. I would not mention the circumstance to you last night, as I did not wish to spoil your enjoyment. And now having performed, as I think, a deed of justice, I subscribe myself,

"Yours faithfully,

"JOHN SNOW."

A general feeling of relief seemed to pervade the room at the conclusion of this letter.

After a pause of a few seconds Mrs. Hastings walked to her husband's desk, whispered a few words into his ear, and left the room. Mr. Hastings again spoke :—

"Brown, my good boy," said he, patting him on the head, "I am sorry for the mistake I have made; you may sit down."

"Now, gentlemen," continued he, assuming a stern expression, "I have a very unpleasant duty to perform. I all along had some suspicion as to the identity of the

actual author of this shameful work, and the proofs I now have are too conclusive to admit of any doubt on the subject. Mrs. Hastings has just informed me that the shirt-front of one of the boys is discoloured with the ink. The name on that garment is Charles Courcy."

"Oh sir, oh sir! forgive me, pray do!" exclaimed the terrified coward, throwing himself on his knees before the master.

"Courcy, rise! I am glad to see that you have no further recourse to prevarication and deceit. You have been guilty of a most shameful deed; and as this is the sequence of many transactions of an equally heinous character, I shall inflict on you the severest punishment that lies in my power. Courcy, in one hour you leave my school for ever. You are expelled."

The bully started back in an attitude of amazement, and then looked beseechingly towards the faces of his schoolfellows, evidently expecting that they would intercede for him. All, however, were stern and immovable; and as the ancient Romans treated an unpopular gladiator at his defeat, so did the boys behave towards Courcy—not a hand was raised to intercede for him. Then, with sullen bearing, but with a craven look, he tottered out of the room. An hour after, he left Apollo Grove for ever; and three days after that we others quitted it for the holidays.

"And now, like Fudladeen in 'Don Juan,'" said Mrs. Jones at its conclusion, "let us pass our remarks on this story."

"I wonder if Fudladeen was often *fuddled*—ha, ha!" said Flutter.

"Fuddled, Mr. Flutter? what may that mean?" inquired Miss Tozer.

"It means having taken a little too much wine."

"Does it really?" was Miss Tozer's interrogative reply.

"Dear me, how stupid of me, to be sure," now said Mrs. Jones, starting up. "It's time we had a glass of wine; I declare I forgot all about it. Harry, will you hand the wine round?" said she, as she went to the table and filled some of the glasses with sherry and ginger wine.

"Which will you take, Mr. Stouter?" asked Harry, after the young ladies had been assisted to a glass of nice sherry or of sweet ginger wine.

"Thank you, I'll have port, please," was his reply. "Do you know what my old friend Wippermann used to say? Well, what he said was this,—port for men, sherry for women and boys."

"Oh, drat the man!" almost exclaimed Mrs. Jones. "I must fetch the port from the supper-table for him."

As soon as all had resumed their seats, Mrs. Jones expressed her opinion that Harry's narrative was, on the whole, satisfactory. She thought that a thrashing would have been better punishment for Courcy, and suggested that if the schoolmaster had not been so extravagant as to give a party, the affair would never have happened. What business, indeed, had a schoolmaster to give parties? Perhaps that was one of the reasons why Harry's bill was so very expensive that half-year.

"That Mr. Snow reminds me in some respects of old Wippermann," said Mr. Stouter. At this everybody laughed, and the worthy man, thinking that the people were laughing at his wit, chuckled very audibly, as if he had said a good thing.

"Well, Snow evidently *was no* fool—ha, ha!" remarked Flutter.

"And as I live, here's a picture of an old gentleman very like him, I should think," said Mrs. Jones, drawing out another puzzle.

"Let me see if I can make this out. Will you help me, Mr. Plastic? for I am afraid I am a very silly little girl," said Miss Tozer, looking archly at Jack.

SHAKESPEARIAN PUZZLE, No. 4.

"Well, Miss Tozer, I think that would hardly be fair, because I know them all. Now, I daresay that Flutter will assist you with pleasure."

"Yes, that I will; do let me try?" eagerly asked the amorous Flutter.

"So you shall, Mr. Flutter," said Miss Tozer with great condescension. "Let me see now. Glory—there, I can make that out; is like,—yes, that's it; is like what, though? Oh, Mr. Flutter, what's that strange-looking thing in the water?"

"'Pon my word, I don't know; let's leave it out for the present, and try the rest," suggested Mr. Flutter.

"Oh, but I am sure I can't guess any more," replied Miss Tozer. "Why, see what a lot I've guessed all by myself. I think we had better give it up. Yes, decidedly so. Ma, dear, we give it up."

"The answer is,—Glory is like a circle in the water, which never ceaseth to enlarge itself till, by broad spreading, it disperse to naught."

"Why, so it is!" said Miss Tozer, quite astonished.

"Well, now, I am sure I could have guessed that myself. Come now, Ma, dear, what's to be done now?"

"Why, Emily, I think we had better have a song. Will Miss Armstrong sing one?"

"I would directly if I could, Mrs. Jones," replied that young lady; "but I am sorry to say that all the songs I know are in the little play we are to perform this evening, and Mr. Plastic won't let me sing them now."

"Affected, forward minx," muttered Emily, grinding her teeth.

"Won't dear Emily sing us one?" suggested Mrs. Armstrong, who had been very silent all the evening.

"I am almost afraid to sing before so many good judges of music," said the modest Emily; "but, however, I'll try to oblige you. Will you turn over the leaves for me, Mr. Plastic?"

"With all the pleasure in life. I shall only be too happy," was Jack's reply.

"How polite Mr. Plastic is to Emily," said Mrs. Jones. "The young men are so insinuating now-a-days, are they not, Mrs. Armstrong?"

"Yes, and the young ladies seem to like it, don't they, Mrs. Gilpin?" said Mrs. Armstrong to Jane, who had been earnestly chatting with William Warble all the evening.

"I am sure I don't know," was all that the blushing girl could say by way of reply.

It may, however, reasonably be doubted whether winged Cupid had been the sole object of the agreeable conversation which had been enjoyed by the above-mentioned people, for it was well known that Warble very often protested against the absurdity of falling in love. He was wont in public to assume a cynical air, and to state that women and gold were the root of all evil. He, however, never gave utterance to this statement when any ladies were present, for, to give William Warble his due, he was usually very polite in his attentions to the fair sex, although, as he often observed, he did not desire the companionship of one for life.

Miss Tozer, leaning (somewhat heavily) on the arm of Jack Plastic, now went to the piano, and sang the following ditty, occasionally glancing at her companion; whilst Mrs. Jones placed the next puzzle on the mantelpiece:—

Leap-Year;

or,

Maidens go a-Wooing.

think me bold, I fear; But maid-ens now go
p
woo-ing, For you know it is Leap-Year.
A maid I am, ah
Rall.
Tempo.
lack-a-day! Per-haps you'll think a

bold one; But that I'd ra-ther you should say, Than
Rall.
Tempo.
CHORUS.
say I am an old one. Pray ex-cuse me,
Con anima,
Don't re - fuse me, Think what dit - ties I have
sung ye; Leap-year fashion, Shew com - passion,
poco lento.
rall.

Archly.
Help me to a beau a - mong ye,
A tempo.
Help me, help me, help me to a beau a -
f p f p
- - mong ye.

Fat and short I should not like,
Nor yet too lean and lanky;
Too much whiskers would not strike,
For I'd rather wed a Yankee.
Brave and bold, with manly port,
Who love with looks can mingle;
But send me one of any sort,
For I'm tired of living single.
Pray excuse me, don't refuse me,
Think what ditties I have sung ye;
Leap-year fashion, show compassion,
Help me to a Beau among ye.

I'll not boast much of beauty,
Yet I'd like a handsome spouse;
I'll in all things do my duty,
Welcome friends, and keep his house.
If grief assail'd, I'd evils banish,
Yet not waste his golden store;
And should gifts of fortune vanish,
I'd make him rich by loving more.
I'm now before ye, don't encore me,
Now I've told you all my mind;
Spare these flushes, maidens' blushes
Cease not, when old friends are kind!

Plastic turned over the leaves of the song, when the time came, for the young lady. Perhaps, however, it would have been as well for her peace of mind if somebody else had performed this act of kindness, as when she came to the line,—

"You'll think I am a bold one,"

she could not refrain from looking point-blank into Plastic's face, whereupon Plastic nodded once or twice, by way of reply to the question; but as his face on the occasion of these movements assumed a most serious aspect, the young lady attributed the nods to the

emotion of his throbbing heart, and instantly divining that they were sighs, indicative of the love he bore for her, she became so nervous that she could scarcely get through her part.

At its conclusion the song was loudly applauded; and the young lady, on being handed to her seat by her cavalier, was at once asked by Mrs. Armstrong who the author of the song was.

"Oh, you mustn't question me, Mrs. Armstrong," said Miss Tozer. "Ma knows all about it. Don't you, Ma, dear?"

"Emily, be quiet. You know I don't like to be asked about that song, as modesty prevents my giving a correct answer."

"What, are you the author of it, Mrs. Jones?" inquired Mrs. Armstrong, evidently surprised at the idea of Mrs. Jones writing anything.

"You must really excuse me, but I would rather not reply to that question," replied Mrs. Jones, endeavouring to blush slightly.

Clever woman! by her indirect answer she got credit for the words of the ballad, although she knew very well that they were written by a poor music-master, from whom she had purchased them at an alarming sacrifice.

"Now, ladies and gentlemen, do try to guess this puzzle?" asked the hostess, pointing to one she had just placed in position.

"Let me see," said Flutter, taking off his spectacles. "I have it! The first word is 'Tis;' and then, there's an 'a;' a man beating a boy; his name should be *Beter*, shouldn't it? Ha! ha! And then there's a scarf. That's a something—scarf or tie. I know—'Tis a cruelty.'"

"And I'll give you another word, Mr. Flutter, which I have guessed all by myself. Do you see it's 'man?'" said Miss Tozer, looking lovingly at him. She felt sure that she had hooked Plastic, and now thought that a little coldness would perhaps urge him to say something definite.

SHAKESPEARIAN PUZZLE, No. 5.

"That's good," said the sapient Flutter. "'Tis a cruelty —man.' Now, what's the other part? There's 'a falling.' That's it, I know; but what are the other words?"

"Try 'to load,' Mr. Flutter," quietly whispered Harry.

"Yes, Mrs. Jones, I have guessed it now, or rather Miss Emily has, for without her assistance I never should have made it out."

"Oh, Mr. Flutter, don't flatter a little girl like that!"

"It's the truth, I declare. The answer to the puzzle is, 'Tis a cruelty to load a falling man.'"

"Quite right. I am pleased to see that you have so much knowledge of Shakespeare," said Mrs. Jones, rather annoyed; for a riddle or a puzzle invariably loses half its point if anybody guesses it. "The quotation, I may add, is taken from 'Henry VIII.'"

"Very good, indeed, Flutter, my boy," now said Mr. Jones, who, under the influence of a glass and a half of sherry, was becoming loquacious. "Ah! Shakespeare was a great man. I was always fond of him. Now, I dare say nobody here has heard me imitate Macready in Macbeth. I'll just give you a taste of it; for I have been too quiet all the evening. It's time I said something."

"Very true, Mr. Jones; but I think you had better not quote Shakespeare; for, as you have no soul for poetry, you will probably murder the text."

"I agree with you there, ma'am," replied Mr. Stouter; "our friend Jones never was much of a speaker. Perhaps you know, ma'am, that when he and I belonged to the Sock and Buskin Society, we always gave him the smallest parts, but that is a long time ago: let's see, it was the year that I first knew you, when you came out as a young girl of eighteen. How long ago was that? let me think."

"Never mind, Mr. Stouter," said Mrs. Jones, quickly; "it's a matter of very little interest to anybody here."

"True, true, ma'am; but what I was going to say was this, that as Jones can't speak, and as I can, suppose I

recite to you the famous speech that my old friend Wippermann delivered at the charity-school dinner."

"Thank you, Mr. Stouter, you are very kind," said the lady, freezingly; "but not at present."

Then turning again to Miss Gilpin, she said, "Come, Miss Jane, you must really change your mind, and sing something. Will you try a duet with Mr. Warble?"

A little whispering took place between the prospective duettists, and the result of the consultation was that Miss Gilpin, followed by Mr. Warble, took her seat at the piano. The pair then sang the "Miserere" scene from "Il Trovatore," although a short time previously Miss Gilpin had vowed that she did not know a single song.

At its conclusion it was loudly applauded by everybody except the hostess. Flutter, who had not disburdened himself of a riddle for some time, here remarked that the people seemed to go to the piano in couples (ha! ha!); and then, as if suddenly struck with a new idea, he inquired why they were like a penny trumpet? A minute elapsed; and as nobody guessed the answer, he said, "Because they go too-too-too. Ha! ha! isn't it good?"

"Oh, very!" said Plastic; but his looks belied him.

"I cannot say that I like Italian music altogether," said the oracular Mrs. Jones; "there is a flimsiness about it that sadly jars with my classical taste; and then, when I think what Italy's ancestors, the ancient Romans, were, I confess I almost feel inclined to despise their degenerate descendants."

"Ah! the Romans were rum 'uns—ha! ha!" remarked the incorrigible Flutter.

"Sir, vulgarity is not wit!" almost shouted the lady.

This blow completely overcame the poor fellow, who blushed deeply, and then held his peace for some time to come.

"Now, to my taste," continued the Queen of the Revels, "there is something infinitely more refined and

charming in many of our old English ballads than in the milk-and-water productions of the Italian *école*. Take, for instance, 'Old Robin Gray,' 'John Anderson my jo,' 'Mary, the Maid of the Mill,' and 'The Bailiff's Daughter of Islington.'"

"True, true; I quite agree with you," replied Jack Plastic, with a roguish twinkle in his eye; "and I beg to compliment you on your musical knowledge, Mrs. Jones; but I fear that you have made a slight mistake in the name of the last ballad: for 'bailiff' you should read 'barber.' The song is, I know, a most touching ballad, and, if I recollect aright, each verse ends thus:—

'She had a gingham umbrella,'
Her name was Isabella,
And her father kept a barber's shop at Islington.'"

"Probably you are right," acquiesced the lady; "my memory has never been very retentive."

At this, Flutter and Warble, who were in the habit of visiting music-halls, almost burst out into a loud guffaw; for they knew that the song just mentioned was written by a comic vocalist, and had been sung with immense applause during the present year.

"And now for my sixth puzzle," continued the lady, evidently pleased with the sensation her great knowledge must have created. "Ah! here it is, and it seems to be more difficult than any we've had yet."

From the few hints that we have thrown out respecting Mr. Warble's character, the reader will probably be surprised to hear of his frequenting music-halls and such-like places of amusement; but candour compels us to state that Warble's philosophical ideas were not a very great burden to him, and that the peculiar tenets he held enabled him to arrange his line of conduct according to his own convenience; and nobody, we are sure, will deny that this is one of the first principles of philosophy.

SHAKESPEARIAN PUZZLE. No. 6.

"I declare I can make out a word in this too: I vow I am growing quite a clever little girl," said Miss Tozer. "Look, ma: Inn—o—cence, Innocence—there, that's right, I am sure; and I almost think I know another,—P—ewer, Pure. There, now it is somebody else's turn: will you try, Mr. Flutter?"

"I should not succeed if I did," almost groaned the despondent Flutter. "It's my luck."

"I think I can make out the first two words. Are they not 'the s—isle—nn (silence)?'" quietly suggested Miss Gilpin, who, like her younger sister Bessie, had been listening all the evening to something that must have sounded very like the voice of love.

"And I am sure," said Harry, quietly, "that that last word but one is 'speak-in-g.' Ah, now I have it. I know the quotation.' Surely it is taken from 'The Winter's Tale.' 'The silence often of pure innocence persuades when speaking fails.'"

"Dear me, how clever you are, Mr. Harry!" exclaimed Mrs. Armstrong.

"But it isn't the right answer," gleefully said Mrs. Jones. "There is no such word as 'persuades.' It should be 'prevails.'"

"Yes, Harry, of course it is," said Miss Tozer. "Don't you see the sculptor veiling the figure?"

"Well, but I am almost sure that it is 'persuades' in Shakespeare," replied the sceptical Harry.

"How absurd of you to set up your knowledge in opposition to Mr. Plastic," sneered Mrs. Jones.

"Pray pardon me, Mrs. Jones," said Mr. Plastic. "I am sorry to say that I am wrong, and that our friend Harry is right. In Shakespeare the word is 'persuades,' but as it was a difficult word to work with I substituted 'prevails,' little thinking that Mr. Harry had such an excellent knowledge of the divine William's works."

"Oh yes, to be sure, of course it is," replied Mrs.

Jones, rather taken aback. "I knew it all the time, only, out of gratitude to you for your kindness, I would not be so ill-mannered as to mention the fact. But, as I was saying just now," continued she, gladly hastening to another topic, "how sadly degenerated we are in most things, manners included, from our noble ancestors! How courteous and gentle they were. Would that we had some of their spirit infused in us—ah me!"

"Oh, that's all very well," at once replied Mr. Jones, the strings of whose tongue had been loosed by the sherry he had drunk; "but I'd rather have some of the wine-merchant's spirit infused in me."

"Oh, Mr. Jones, I am surprised at you!" said his wife. "What a commonplace speech! But what can we expect from a man like you, who has no soul? Has he, Mrs. Armstrong?"

"Well, I don't know, I am sure," answered the lady; "but I think it is very wrong to contradict a lady in anything; so let us punish him, Mrs. Jones, by making him tell a story: he has done nothing yet."

"A good idea, but the sentence is scarcely hard enough," said the vindictive lady. "Therefore, as Queen of the Revels to-night, I command him to tell us a story, and in order to make his sentence more severe, it must be a tale about spirits."

"Well, I don't exactly know if I recollect one," replied the condemned man; "but if an adventure I had as a schoolboy will do, I'll tell it you."

"Mind, there must be spirits in it," said his wife.

"Well, there is a ghost in it, my dear."

"Then that will do; so begin at once, sir."

After clearing his throat, the worthy man commenced the following tale:—

The Woman without a Head.

A Ghost Story for Christmas.

We had talked about it at school, and said that when we went home for the Christmas holidays, we would face it; nay, some of us had gone so far as to "ring fingers" on it, and no boy would dare to break his word after that. This was how it was done: each boy locked his little fingers in those of his schoolfellows, not missing one, who promised to join in the adventure; and while their fingers were linked together, they said,—

"Ring finger left, ring finger right:
May the devil fly away with me
At twelve o'clock that night
If I don't do what I swear to you."

But when it came to ringing fingers, out of the eight schoolboys, all living in the same village, who had promised to go, at twelve o'clock at night, to where the woman walked without a head, three refused. One said it was wicked to ring fingers and say those lines; another said perhaps the devil might be there as well as the ghost, and that he feared him more than he did the woman without a head; a third, the most courageous boy in the school, said it was childish to ring fingers, but he would go without any of that nonsense. The five all said he shouldn't go with them, unless he ringed fingers. He was throwing a ball up in the playground at the time, and catching it; and without even stopping or taking his eye off the ball, he coolly said, "Well, then, I'll go by myself;" at which the other five sneered and laughed.

Jack Black, who had proposed the adventure, was also

a brave-hearted boy. He was as brown as a gipsy, and had large prominent eyes, as dark as ripe sloes, and didn't believe in ghosts.

"Why, when we were returning so late last year from uncle's harvest-home supper," said Jack, "and you were all so frightened at what we saw by the hedge a few yards from Tom Otter's gibbet-post, and I went up by myself, what was it?—an old white cow feeding, with her head down and her tail toward us, in the ditch. I know it looked like a ghost, with its hinder legs apart and no head to be seen; and we shall find this woman that walks in white, without a head, something or another that's no more a ghost than I am."

"But what did Farmer Watson's man see by the guide-post, where the four cross-roads meet, by Scotton Common?" said Bill Appleyard. "Why, he came running home as white as a sheet; and we all know that a man who committed suicide was buried at midnight under that guide-post. He saw the ghost sitting on the post, with its feet dangling down and its arms spread out, as plain, he says, as he saw Farmer Watson's house-door when he ran up to it."

"And what did Farmer Watson say?" inquired Jack Black. "Why, that Joe Stow had been to his club-feast, and, getting drunk, had hung his clothes on the guide-post, fancying he was at home; so there he lay, and was found asleep at the foot of it next morning, though all his clothes were gone excepting a smock-frock, which the thieves didn't think was worth stealing."

"I'll let you all see what I'll do when we come up to the ghost without a head," said Charley Craven, one of the five who had "ringed fingers," and who was the greatest coward in the school. "I'll take my pockets full of stones, and have a shy at her; and if I hit her, I'll make her jump."

"You'll be the first to run away, Charley," said another

boy. "Do you remember the old pollard oak, with its two branches sticking out like arms, and the clustering ivy on the top of its stem, which, in the moonlight, you took for its head? Mum's the word, Charley; but you never ran over the same space of ground so quickly in all your life as you did that night, back again to the toll-gate."

Charley at that moment pretended to be very attentive to Ned Armstrong, and began to try who could throw his ball the highest, while Ned gave a quiet wink as he handed him the ball, showing he understood all about it, though he had declined ringing fingers. Courageous as a lion, Ned never was heard to boast of his bravery, nor accuse any of his schoolfellows of cowardice. He once chased a mad dog, when grown-up men stood out of its way, and smothered it between two haystacks that stood close together.

A few days after this conversation took place, the school broke up for the Christmas holidays.

The school I am writing about was in a little market-town, and was attended by the sons of tradesmen and well-to-do farmers, who sent their boys from the outlying villages; some of them going home as often as once a week, others every month, according to the distances and the agreement with the schoolmaster. Some lodged in the town, and brought food enough from their father's farmhouses to last all the week; others had their weekly allowance brought every market-day, either by the carrier or the market-boat: and right well did they live in those days, compared with the boarders.

Christmas at these old farmhouses was a jolly season; for corn at this time was selling at eighty and ninety shillings a quarter, fully double what it fetches now; and rents were not so high in my boyish days. They killed their pigs just before Christmas, and, I do believe, could never have risen satisfied from a Christmas feast,

had not the pigs been killed for the occasion. Who ever sits down to a real spare-rib now, a fore-loin with the thickest part of the meat cut off, then salted for a day or two, then roasted, and strewn with sage, with lots of apple-sauce, and mealy potatoes mashed in cream and butter? Eat! we had to unbutton our waistcoats to make room for more, it was so good. We preferred it to roast goose. Then the sausages! made from pork that was fattened on milk, pease, barley-meal, and mashed potatoes, and flavoured with—ah! there is a secret lost, excepting to a few of those old farm-wives, like some of the rich colours used in staining glass in ancient days. There are no such sausages now. As for mince and pork pies, they melted in the mouth, the crusts were so rich: "we shall never look upon their like again."

A Christmas hamper sent as a present from one of those old farmhouses, in those days, contained all these good things, besides the stubble-fed goose, apples, sage and onions, and often those large, mealy, pink-eyed, kidney potatoes to fill up with instead of straw. The yule-logs they burnt in those days were the roots of large trees, the smallest filling a barrow.

It was Christmas-eve, and Jack Black had so managed matters as to get his four schoolfellows to supper at his father's house who had sworn on that night to visit the spot where the woman without a head was said to walk. What a supper those boys did eat, surely! Then Jack's fond old mother made them a great jug of hot elderberry wine, to warm them before they went out to hear the Waits. To hear the Waits was the excuse for stopping out late—for the ghost was not to be seen until midnight; and as the Christmas Waits went playing from one village to another, no time was stated for the boys to return.

"Past eleven o'clock," said Jack; "it's time we started. Button yourself well up, Charley; it's a fine moonlight

night, but looks as if we should have another fall of snow, and is rather cold."

"We haven't finished our elder wine yet," said Charley; "and I think your clock's a good bit too fast, and we've plenty of time."

"Clock's right to the very minute," said Farmer Black, gaping, for it was past his usual bed-time. "So, if you're going, be off. Jane and Mary (the servants) have got their sweethearts in the kitchen, so will be sure to sit up for you."

There was no more to be said: besides, the Waits were heard playing at a remote grange across the fields while he was speaking.

"Are you going to fill your pockets with stones, Charley?" said Jack.

"No; they're too cold to put in one's pocket on a night like this," answered Charley. "I wish it wasn't so far."

"I wish we'd been, and it was all over," said Bill Appleyard. "What are we to do if we should see her?"

"Wish her a merry Christmas and a happy New Year," replied Jack Black. "You're not frightened, are you, Billy?"

"It's a nasty lonely road to go," answered Billy, "and such a many things have happened at some of the places we have to pass. But I hope we sha'n't see anything bad."

The three boys walked on as close together as they well could, while Jack marched manfully to the front, a little grave, but not at all afraid. It was true they had to pass several places that bore evil names.

In the creek, which they had to cross by a narrow wooden bridge, on their way to the river-bank, a young girl had drowned herself because she saw her sweetheart walking with a young woman, which happened to be his aunt, though she never knew it. In the old wooden mill at the end of the lonesome lane, Grits the miller had

hanged himself, because a lot of stuff was found in his mill with which he adulterated his flour; so he committed suicide, preferring that way of getting out of the world to standing his trial at the sessions, while he was out on bail. Half-way down the lane leading to the river, in an osier-holt, a woman had been found with her head cut off, and hers was said to be the ghost that walked on the river-bank, looking for her head, which it was supposed had been thrown into the river, as it was never found. As they passed the osier-holt Charley's teeth were heard to chatter again, but he said it was only the cold.

At the end of the lane the river made a sweep, bending like a half-moon, and on that bank within the curve the Woman Without a Head was said to walk.

Not a word was uttered when they reached the end of the lane and ascended the gentle slope which formed a part of the river-bank. The ground was white with snow. The moon shed a grey, woolly kind of light, which showed that there was more snow in the clouds. The willows along the bank waved to and fro in the midnight breeze, bending their tops as if they had something to say to one another. The river moaned as it flowed along, as if in pain, or there was not room enough for it to run between the banks against which it chafed and fretted, for it was very full. You could fancy that old river reflected back many strange sights on its way from its source, among the inland hills, to the sea, especially in the night, and that it had secrets which will never be revealed until its ancient bed is laid bare, and the graves give up their dead.

"There is nothing to be seen," said Charley, turning his back to where the banks bended round like a huge crescent, those on the opposite side of the river looking as if they would come across if they could, and then fill up the rounded sweep.

"Isn't there, though! What do you call that?" said

Jack, pointing with his finger to a white object in the distance.

A good-sized towel would have covered the heads of all the boys, so closely were they huddled together, as Jack Black stood pointing with his finger to the white object on the river-bank.

"I daren't stay any longer," exclaimed Billy Appleyard. "Look, it moves! it is coming this way! It has no head! Let us run before it comes!"

Charley saw it, gave one shriek, and went headlong down the bank into the lane, making the snow fly about him like a cloud of summer dust, so thickly had it drifted on the slope.

"There are four of us without Charley," said Jack, in a solemn voice, a little tremulous through fear, but not the less determined. "I will wait till it comes up and see what it's like. I have said I will, and I will. You may leave me if you like. Hark, I hear its footsteps. I won't move a step till it reaches that stile. If I do, may I——"

What he would have said was cut short through a great snowball striking him on the front of his hat, and breaking all over his face. He had to rub the snow out of his eyes before he could again see anything clearly.

That snowball had knocked all the fear out of Jack. His blood was up. "Two can play at that game," said Jack, stooping down and filling his hands with snow. But before he had kneaded his snowball hard enough, bang came another, hitting Billy Appleyard on the chest.

"That's your game, is it?" said Billy. "I can't stand snowballing without having a shy back. Fire away, Jack!"

Jack stood, his arm drawn back ready to let fly, and the headless ghost also stood motionless behind the stile, not more than ten yards from him. It had no more head than a plate, and the neck showed as smooth and even on the

top as a plate when all the pudding is eaten. It was of a dull grey white. Bang came another snowball, that time missing Jack, and as he had his eye on the ghost at the moment the snowball was thrown, he felt certain that it had been hurled by some other hand; so, without further ceremony, he let fly at the woman without a head, and hit her fairly just below where her head ought to have been.

Billy Appleyard and the boy behind him fired the next two shots, both of which hit the ghost. But the woman without a head was no more disposed to be snowballed quietly than Jack Black had been; so, stooping down, she soon made a large snowball, and hit Jack on the head.

"If she's no head, she's got eyes somewhere," said Jack, "or she couldn't take such a good aim as that. Come up and help to make some snowballs, Charley; it's no more a ghost than I am."

"Do you see that?" said Billy Appleyard; "she has only to stoop down and pick up the snowballs ready made. Look, there are four or five lying on her left arm now. I dont like that a bit, Jack; and do you know, the last one she threw hit me on the ear, and seemed quite hot. Perhaps it's the devil after all, and he may end by throwing red-hot snowballs at us."

"Devil, or not," replied Jack, firing away as fast as the snowballs could be handed to him, "I'll have it out with him. And if he comes over the style, and you'll stick to me, we'll roll him down the bank, in the snow, and see if we can make it hiss under him."

"It isn't a fair fight," said another boy; "she's hit me twice on the head, and has got no head for me to hit again."

"Peg away," said Jack, "I saw the eyes glitter through an opening in the neck, and we shall find a head before we've done. But there's more than one against us. Do you see how the balls keep coming from below the bank? Make away as fast as you can, and follow me up, and I'll take care not a shot misses."

There was a break where a portion of the bank had been undermined and washed away, into which the river now flowed. This was so high that the boys could seethe the snowballs in water, which made them as solid again—as every boy knows,—and hand them to Jack as fast as he could throw them; for it was at last a duel between Jack and his headless opponent, who seemed to be as well supplied with ammunition as he was.

But the sodden balls soon began to tell, especially after Jack had found that the most vulnerable part of his enemy was in the opening at the neck; and every now and then he sent a ball home with such a thump, as made the ghost cry "Oh!" again.

"We've found her mouth at last," exclaimed Jack; "and where there's a mouth there must be a head. Knead them as hard together as you can, and we shall find the head soon. Well done, Charley; I see you are not frightened now. Hand me the snowballs as fast as they make 'em."

"I say, that isn't fair; you're mixing mud with your snowballs, and making them as hard as stones," exclaimed the ghost, at last, thrusting its head out of the opening of the white smock-frock, which it had worn drawn high above the ears.

"We are beaten," said I, coming up the bank where I had been concealed making snowballs for Ned Armstrong, who had played the part of the woman without a head: "five to two in a snowballing match is too great odds against us, even when one has the credit of being a ghost."

"I think I should have run for it," said Jack Black, shaking hands with Ned, "if it hadn't been for the snowball you threw at me," turning to me. "I knew then you had come to frighten us; but you overdid it. Nobody ever heard of a ghost snowballing anyone. I felt sure it was you, Ned."

"It gave me a turn," said Billy Appleyard, "when I

saw you moving, all in white, so slowly along the bank, until I heard the snow 'scrunch' under your feet, and then I thought 'she treads very heavily for a ghost,' for I'd always heard that ghosts move along as still as a shadow."

The smock-frock was a new one which I had borrowed from one of my uncle's farm servants, and as stiff about the collar, with rough ornamental needle-work, as if it had been lined with tin; so that when Ned slipped it over him like a shirt, I had only to button the collar above his head, and he was headless in a moment, with a capital look-out through the slit at the opening of the neck. That was the spot Jack Black aimed at and hit with his sodden snowballs, and thus compelled Ned to cry out for quarter.

Our adventure was told at every village hearth throughout that merry old Christmas, and everybody said it was a courageous act to snowball the pretended ghost, and great credit was given to Charley Craven for handing Jack the snowballs while he pelted the sham Woman Without a Head.

"What a brave boy you must have been, Mr. Jones," said Mrs. Armstrong, smiling. "I hope that my four lads are of the same spirit. But don't you think it was wrong of that good old man to allow you lads to be out so late at night? Poor dears! You might easily have caught cold; and who knows what that might have led to?"

"Not we, ma'am, I can tell you," replied Jones; "we were all too hearty to take cold like that—weren't we, Stouter, my boy?" asked he, at the same time slapping his friend on the back.

"Well, you may have been, Jones; but I know that I wasn't. I was always a delicate boy, and had to be well looked after; but I say, ma'am, haven't you any more of those puzzles? I should like to have a guess myself."

SHAKESPEARIAN PUZZLE. No. 7.

"Oh, yes, Mr. Stouter, I have two more. Now, try to guess this one," said she, placing the seventh on the mantelpiece.

"Humph! that's rather too much for me," replied Stouter. "Let's see—the first word is 'we.' Then, a little further on, I see *t* and hares—that means 'there's;' but that's all I can make out."

"Don't you see that the young lady in the corner is deaf?" Harry chimed in. "Well, then, I think that word is 'defy.'"

"Now it is my turn," smilingly said Miss Tozer. "The last word is 'patriot,' I think. Don't you see two Irishmen quarrelling? 'Pon my word, I am growing quite a clever little girl."

"But, my dear, you're wrong," replied Mrs. Jones, referring to her key. "It isn't 'patriot' at all."

"Oh, Ma, dear, it's too bad of you to take me down like that," poutingly remarked the fair damsel.

"Now, Mr. Warble, won't you try to guess a word? I vow, you have scarcely spoken a word all the evening."

"I can't, I am sure, Mrs. Jones. I have been endeavouring to persuade myself that there is no such virtue as contentment in the world; besides, I never was good at riddles, even as a boy."

"But you don't call this a riddle, sir? This is something far superior to a riddle. This, sir, is a work of art."

"Well, ma'am, at any rate it belongs to the same tribe, and it's too much for me."

"To tell you the truth, Mrs. Jones, I think he has fallen in love with Jane Gilpin, and that she's rather fond of him," whispered Mrs. Armstrong to Mrs. Jones.

"Will nobody guess this puzzle?" now asked the hostess.

"Let's give it up," said two or three at once.

"Oh, fie, ladies and gentlemen! to be beaten by an

easy puzzle like that. I knew it the moment I saw it. The answer is—'We defy augury. There's a special providence in the fall of a sparrow;' and it is taken from 'Hamlet.'"

"Ah! 'Hamlet' is a fine play," remarked Mr. Stouter; "but, to my taste, 'Othello' is a finer. I once played Iago, ma'am, with the Sock and Buskin Club, and a very good Iago I was. My old friend Wippermann, whose name I believe I have already mentioned, was the Othello. Ah, he knew how to act if any man did! I mind me, that in one part of the play he seized me by the throat, and nearly dislocated my neck, and a man in the gallery said he was a fool to mind what that ugly chap said; but I was a good actor, for all that."

* * * * * *

"Well, and is nobody going to speak?" said Mrs. Jones, after a minute of silence had elapsed.

"We don't know what to say, Ma, dear," replied Emily, looking affectionately at Plastic.

"Oh, but this won't do," continued the lady of the house. "Now, whose turn is it to tell a story? Come, Mrs. Armstrong, can't you do something to amuse us?"

"I am sorry to say that I can't," was that lady's reply.

"Oh! Ma, dear, I have it," suddenly said Miss Tozer, starting up: "Mr. Plastic promised to sing us a new comic song; let's have it now."

"To be sure, my child: the very thing. Mr. Plastic, will you be so kind?"

"With all my heart, my dear madam."

"You naughty man," said Miss Tozer, shaking her head at him, "why did you not tell us about it before?"

"My modesty would not allow me to do that."

"Modesty, indeed!" said Mrs. Jones, "what young man, nowadays, has any? Will you begin, please, Mr. Plastic?"

Jack went to the piano, and, after playing a few bars, began as follows,—

VALENTINE & ORSON

OR

THE SWELL & THE ROUGH.

THE

NEW AND ORIGINAL MUSIC

COMPOSED

By the Most Celebrated Maestros

OF THE DAY

Valentine and Orson;

or,

The Swell and the Rough.

("*Peter Gray.*")

Once on a time, in Artois wood, King Pepin, so they say,
With all his peers a-hunting rode on St. Valentine his day—
On the Fourteenth of Februari-*ay*,
On the postman's holiday,—
And follow'd here the fallow deer, that tried to get away.
Says King Pepin, "Hark forward! hark away!"
The horns sound, Too ral laddey ho! ri too ral laddey day!

They came into a mossy dell, with snowdrops all so gay,
And in the midst of all of 'em a little baby lay,—
A dear little infant lay,
A pretty little cherub lay,—
And a golden mantle kept him from the nasty damp cold clay.
Says King Pepin, "Pick up the child, I say!"
The babe cried—"Too ral laddey ho! ri too ral laddey day!"

"It may be, Sire, of noble birth!" Says Pepin, "So it may!
We'll take it home and bring it up, and make its parients pay,
Its cruel parients pay,
Its stingy parients pay,—
And Valentine we'll christen it, in honour of the day!"

Says King Pepin, "About we know our way!"
Then *he* sang, "Too ral laddey ho! ri too ral
laddey day!"

("*Sally, come up.*")

At King Pepin's court so gay,
Valentine bears the palm away:
He's twenty-one—quite time to slay
Our foes,—so come here, Vally!
You must be a knight
Of valour and of might,—
So kneel down there, let's do it right,
And you'll rise up Sir Vally!
Vally, come up!
Oh, Vally, kneel down!
Sir Vally, arise, and win renown:
There isn't a knight that serves the crown
That's anything like Sir Vally!

"A boon, a boon, my gracious liege!"
"You shan't in vain our ear besiege:
What is't?" "I ask the privilege
Of first go in," says Vally.
"I claim the right
Of going out to fight
The first grim ogre, or giant, or sprite,
That may turn up," says Vally.
Vally, come up!
Oh, Vally, kneel down,
Sir Vally, arise, and win renown:
There isn't a knight that serves the crown
That's anything like Sir Vally!

"We grant your prayer, it is but fair—
Go stop that knocking, and see who's there;

Perchance it is some little affair
That will just suit Sir Vally!
It may be some poor wight,
O'ercome with terror and fright
At some grim ogre, or giant, or sprite—'
"I hope it is!" says Vally.
Sir Vally, get up,
No longer kneel down;
Sir Vally, arise, and win renown:
There isn't a knight that serves the crown
That's anything like Sir Vally.

"Oh Sire, oh Sire, we quake with fear—
A horrible monster, half man, half bear,
Unfortunate peasants doth rend and tear,
But children princi*pal*ly!
Babies he eats up quite—
Pray, Sire, send out a knight
To Artois forest, this wretch to fight—"
"Ah, here's a chance for Sir Vally.
Good peasants, get up,
Don't kneel on the ground,
A kneesy position it will not be found;
Saddle Lord Clifden, and bring him round—
Fetch my best armour for Vally!"

Sir Vally look'd up, Sir Vally look'd down—
He didn't half like it; the courtiers frown;
Think they to themselves, "We'll do him brown,"
They always were jealous of Vally.
But says Sir Vally, "All right;
Artois I'll start for this night!"
So at these kind friends merely taking a sight,
He was off without more shilly-shally!

Lord Clifden, come up,
We'll ride o'er the ground
To Artois wood, where this brute's to be found;
There isn't a horse in the country round
Like bonny Lord Clifden, says Vally.

When they got there, they soon found the lair
Of the savage, whose looks poor Lord Clifden did scare:
So Sir Vally dismounted, and said, "Now all's fair,
On foot we shall fight more *equally*!"
The wild'un he was such a fright,
His body with hair cover'd quite,
With claws to scratch with, and teeth to bite,
He look'd all a match for Sir Vally!
Sir Vally came up,
Sir Vally went down—
With all his skill he was very soon thrown;
The savage's club had crack'd his crown,
But he wasn't yet hurt mor*tally*!

In the next round, the savage soon found
That science and pluck success had crown'd:
He felt his sides pierced with many a wound,
While he couldn't get at Sir Vally!
Advancing with all his might,
He saw in his shield so bright
His face! Sorely puzzled, he took such a fright
That he gave in at once to Sir Vally!
Lord Clifden, gee up!
We'll ride back to town—
We've taken the monster, and won renown;
Good luck to me, how my kind friends will frown,
When they once more set eyes on Sir Vally!

(*Recitative*—"*The Ballad of Sir Patrick Spence.*")

The King sat in the Palais Royal,
And drunk his cheap French wine—
"Oh! where shall I find gentle knight
Like good Sir Valentine?

Yestreen I saw the new moon
With the old moon on her arm—
And I fear, oh dear! Oh dear! I fear
Sir Valentine hath come to harm!"

("*Sally, come up.*")

Hark! I hear a bugle-call—
It is Sir Vally!—go meet him all;—
Some of you now will have to sing small;—
There's none of you like Sir Vally!
He brings the Gorilla home too,
Like Monsieur du Chaillu!
Get out and cheer him—why look so blue?
Don't be so jealous of Vally.
"Sir Vally, you're wel-
-come back to town,
You've conquer'd the savage, and won renown:
There isn't a knight that serves the crown
That we *vally* so much as Sir Vally!"

(*Finale*—"*The Ballad of Billy Taylor.*")

Now all sorts of Stars and Garters
On Sir Valentine were shower'd;
And he won the wild man's heart, as
All things are by love o'erpower'd.
Rum tum tiddy iddy, fol lol lido, &c.

And they named the savage Orson,
'Cause by bears brought up was he—
Nursed by brutes that walk all fours on;
Rough he was, but frank and free.
Rum tum tiddy iddy, &c.

So Sir Valentine and Orson
Firm allies soon came to be.
Wicked giants spent their force on,
And released a fair ladye.
Rum tum tiddy iddy, &c.

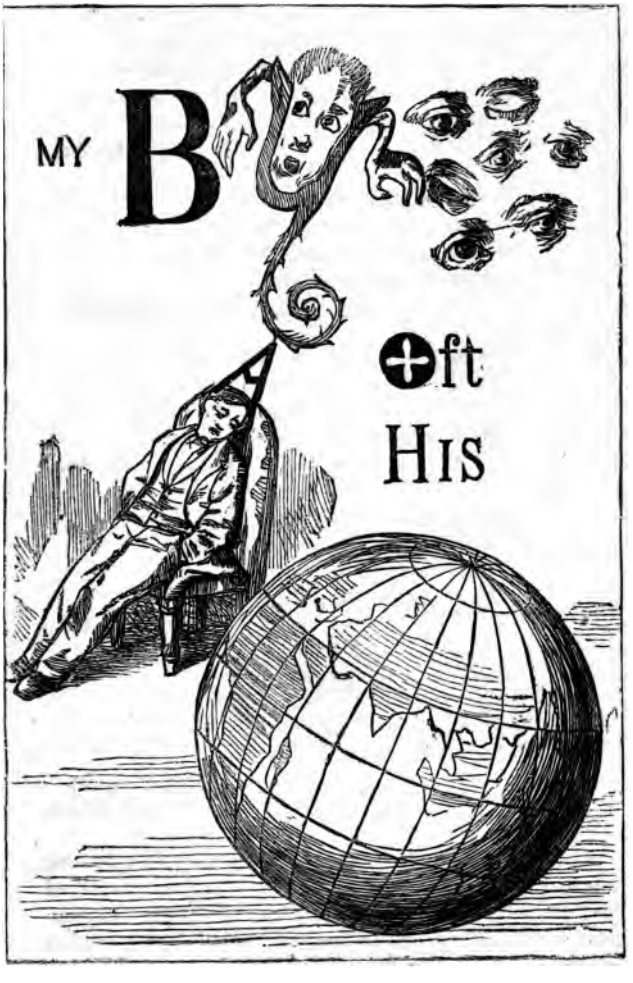
This lady proved to be the mother
Of the two, and thus, you see,
Orson was the knight's twin brother,—
Both were lost in infancy.
Rum tum tiddy iddy, &c.

She was also Pepin's sister,
And the King of Greece's queen—
All the weary years he'd miss'd her
She'd the giant's pris'ner been.
Rum tum tiddy iddy, &c.

Valentine is heir to Pepin:
Orson takes his mother home—
To the throne of Greece he'll step in,
Should no Revolution come.
Rum tum tiddy iddy, &c.
[*Dance ad lib.*

As soon as the rapturous applause with which this song was greeted had somewhat subsided, Mrs. Jones displayed her last puzzle on the mantelpiece, and informed the company that supper would be served as soon as the solution was guessed.

SHAKESPEARIAN PUZZLE, No. 8.



The first to speak was Miss Tozer.

"I declare I know two words on this. I am becoming quite a blue-stocking," said she, laughing. "See,—'oft his,' stands for 'of this,' of course. Now I have done my share."

"The boy on the chair is a-weary, I think," suggested Harry.

"And all those eyes stand, I imagine, for 'is,'" murmured Flutter.

"Well, then," said Stouter, "we have now 'is a-weary of this.' Can no one guess the rest? If it had been in 'Othello' or in 'The Merchant of Venice,' I'd have guessed at once, for I am very well up in those plays."

"I almost think I know it," said Harry, humorously. "That globe stands for 'world,' I think. Does it, ma'am?" asked he of Mrs. Jones.

"Right," was the answer.

"Then it's 'My little body is a-weary of this great world,' and it is spoken by Portia in 'The Merchant of Venice.'"

"Nonsense, sir, it can't be," shouted Mr. Stouter.

"But it is, Mr. Stouter, I assure you," at once said Mrs. Jones.

"Dear me, how very strange! Why, I thought I knew every line in that play."

"We are all liable to err, Mr. Stouter," was Mrs. Jones's consolatory remark. Before Mr. Stouter could reply, the door opened, and a servant entered.

"Supper ready—oh, very well," said Mrs. Jones to the maid. "Mr. Jones, will you take Mrs. Armstrong? Mr. Plastic, my daughter Emily; Mr. Warble, will you hand Miss Gilpin? Mr. Flutter, Miss Armstrong; and Harry, you hand Miss Bessie in. Mr. Stouter, your arm. I thank you."

Mr. Jones, in accordance with his orders, waited for a minute after the others to lower the gas, and the whole band walked into the dining-room, where the table

groaned (?) under the weight of the delicacies which Mrs. Jones had provided for her guests, including the twelve crackers, purchased at the request of her daughter Emily.

"Oh, Mr. Plastic," said Emily Tozer, thoughtfully, as she leant heavily upon his arm, "do you recollect the last puzzle we had?"

"To be sure I do," was Jack's reply. "'My little body is a-weary of this great world.' That was it, I think?"

"True, Mr. Plastic, true; and you will scarcely believe me, I am sure, when I assure you that many girls are like that puzzle. Their little bodies are weary, very weary, I can tell you. At home they feel lonely and dull. Their intellectual ideas admit of no sympathy with the other inmates of the house in which they dwell. They long for a kindred soul to rejoice when they are glad, and to weep when they are in sorrow. I know of such a one, Mr. Plastic."

"'Gad, she must mean Polly Armstrong. I believe that they are great friends, and perhaps Polly has told her that she likes me. Do you really know such a girl, Miss Tozer? Believe me, from my heart, I feel for her, for I, too, long for a kindred heart to share my home—one whose sympathies are the same as mine; and, what's more, I have met with such a creature, Miss Tozer."

"You have, Mr. Plastic?" murmured the fair Emily.

"I have indeed, but, like most lovers, I dare scarcely flatter myself so far as to believe that she returns my passion."

"You should ask her at once, Mr. Plastic. Don't you know that faint heart ne'er won fair lady yet? Why, a man of your appearance and intellect might——"

"Take a sandwich, Miss Tozer?" suddenly said Mr. Flutter, who had observed the earnestness with which she and Plastic were conversing. Poor Flutter was so deeply in love with Emily Tozer, that his jealous nature revolted when anybody else paid her attention.

The proffered sandwich was declined, but Flutter's end was attained, for Plastic now felt that it was his duty to attend to the ladies, and he therefore bustled about with a fork in one hand, and a sandwich-dish in the other, halting as long as he could in front of Miss Armstrong, much to Miss Tozer's disgust and Flutter's delight.

As soon as the edge had been taken off the appetites of the guests, Mrs. Jones informed them that she disapproved of speeches. The fact was that Jones was no orator, and as etiquette would not allow Mrs. Jones to return thanks for her husband's health, she determined that it should not be drunk at all. "But I have no objection to a few *jeux d'esprits*," said she, "in the shape of riddles, my own collection of epitaphs, and other trifles."

The chronicler of the doings at Mrs. Jones's Evening Party deeply regrets that he is not able to publish the comments that were passed on the riddles and other witticisms uttered by the guests during supper, as his friend Timothy Flutter, from whose note-book he was obliged to copy them, was, owing to the affectionate behaviour of Emily towards Jack Plastic, so very nervous and agitated during the meal, that many of the entries in the volume in question were almost illegible. The humble chronicler is therefore compelled to content himself with recording only the *jeux d'esprits* themselves, and is forced to leave the reader's imagination to guess the remarks that were called forth by the different witty effusions of the several authors whose names appear at the head of the three next sections.

Flutter's Fanciful Roll of Riddles.

What is the difference between a stout father and the scent of certain flowers?—One is a broad pa', the other a narrow ma' (aroma).

Why is a lamplighter an enemy to snakes?—Because he's always cutting up a little ladder (little adder).

Why is a cheap Sheffield cutler like "Fagin the Jew?" Because he keeps his *eye* on (iron) *blades*, and makes them *steel*.

What is the difference between a man going up steps and one looking up?—The one steps upstairs and the other stares up steps.

What is the difference between a clock and a man?—When a clock is wound up it goes, but when a man is "wound up" he stops.

What is the difference between a zebra and a stock of standard jewellery?—One is all marked with rings, the other contains rings which are *hall-marked*.

Why is a contented man of great wealth like a ghost?—Because he is a *happy rich'un* (apparition).

Why should a quill pen never be used in inditing secret matters?—Because it's apt to *split*.

Why is a windy orator like a whale?—Because he often rises to *spout*.

Why is the letter O like the equator?—Because it is a circle dividing the gl-o-be into two equal parts.

Why are a lady's ear-rings like men in debt?—Because they are in arrears (her ears).

Why are ladies like churches?—1. There is no *living* without them. 2. There's many *aspire* (a spire) to them. 3. They are objects of *adoration*. 4. They have a *loud clapper* in their *upper story*.

What is that which has feet and nails, but neither legs, toes, nor claws?—A yard measure.

When do people rig the market?—When they want to have a *sale*.

What loathsome disease does a policeman resemble?—The malignant cholera (collarer).

How is the sun supported?—By its beams.

What is the difference between a cloud and a beaten child?—One pours with rain, the other roars with pain.

Why is a sombre person naturally wise?—Because he is a solemn 'un.

Why is Dr. Cumming like a hypocrite?—Because he's a F.R.S.E. (Pharisee).

When is a fish above its station?—When it rises and takes a fly.

Why is the letter S a noisy letter?—Because it makes even cream scream.

Why is a cricket-ball like a cannon-ball?—Because it bowls down many a man's stumps.

Why is a naval outfitter a great bully?—Because he gives cuffs right and left to many a blue jacket.

When do men's heads resemble their dwellings?—When they are covered with tiles.

What was the difference between Douglas at Chevy Chase, and Lord Palmerston at Glasgow?—Douglas was stout and good, Palmerston had gout and stood.

Why is a dinner given to a lunatic like a crowded thoroughfare?—Because it's a fool's treat (full street).

Why is last month like cricket?—Because it's a pastime.

What is the difference between a person who salutes a donkey, and that quadruped?—One greets an ass, the other eats grass.

Why is a chandler like a gossip?—Because he circulates candles (scandals).

What is the difference between Dirk Hatterick uttering a jest, and the "Wizard of the North" enjoying his

cigar?—The one is a smuggler making a joke, the other a juggler taking a smoke.

Why ought a person never to mistake his father's voice? Because it is a parent (apparent) who is speaking.

Why is Joe Goss like Wat Tyler?—Because he was felled by a *Mace*.

Why is a man who has not a light for his pipe like Sir Walter Scott?—Because he is *matchless*.

Why is a man defending a woman like a horticulturist? Because he's a guardin' her (gardener).

What flower is the careful use of the broom like?—Love lies weeping (lovely sweeping).

If I am tired of my mother's sister, why am I a flatterer?—Because I am a sick of aunt.

Why is Ireland like a pink?—Because it is a car nation.

Why do we find our clothes bigger when taken out of a box than when put in?—Because we find them doubled.

What is the difference between a particular joint of beef and the noise made by cattle?—One is a sirloin, and the other a lowin', sir.

Why is a perfectly even cliff like a philosopher's head? Because there is no ledge there.

What meat is that of which the English and French names are as different as happiness and unhappiness?—Veal and veau (weal and woe).

Why is a lost gown like one's master's wife?—Because it is a miss'd dress.

What flower is like two rows of old maids?—The primrose (prim rows).

When does a lady's maid illtreat her mistress's gown? When she collars and cuffs it in the morning.

Why is some of the corn found in the Egyptian tombs all nonsense?—Because it's mummy rye.

Why is a ploughman like a Spanish cloak?—Because he is a man tiller.

What fruit is like a muddy stream?—A black currant.

Which of the apostles is most like the old heathen gods? The Jew Peter.

If asked a question, to which of my relations ought I to point?—To my mother's sister, because she's my aunt, sir.

Why are judges considered wise?—Because they are solemn 'uns.

What is the difference between a speech full of grand expressions, and coarse meal?—One is flowery, and the other rye flour.

What shrub resembles a Hebrew flea?—A juniper (Jew nipper).

What complaint did Rebecca make when she addressed her husband?—My eyes ache (Isaac).

Who is the glutton's patron saint?—St. Omach.

Why are stags the laziest animals on earth?—Because they like their doze (does) better than anything.

What animal is like a measure of grain?—A peccary (peck o' rye).

What is generally the favourite note of a public singer? A tenor (tenner).

If a man is plagued with nerves, what is the best way he can go about to keep them?—If he shakes them well, and "jarrs" them, he will make a "preserve" of them.

Why is the letter B a great magician?—Because it can transform the east into a beast, and a rook into a brook.

What class of exhibitors is like a heavy fall of rain?—A shower of cats and dogs.

Why is a gnat like a slanderer?—Because he is a back-biter.

What article of furniture is like a boot?—A foot-stool.

Why is the letter E like death?—Because it is the end of life.

Why does a grasshopper belong by rights to one of the world's eras before our own?—Because he belongs to the herb-age.

Which of the possessive pronouns is very niggardly?—My, sir.

What is the difference between window-hangings and a red dog?—One is a curtain, and the other a tan cur.

What is the extraordinary effect that the letter Y has upon the human species?—It can transform one man into many.

From the right or the left my name you may read;
A man without me were benighted indeed;
A teacher I am—have a pupil and boarder,
And keep a good lash to hold him in order.
No mortal alive ever saw me eat food,
But when I feel weakly a glass does me good;
So well am I known, so peculiar my fame,
None speak of themselves without using my name.
—Eye.

Why is a thankful person like a silly fellow?—Because he is grateful (great fool).

Why is a man confined to bed with a broken leg like a person in a lunatic asylum?—Because he's in bed lame (Bedlam).

What is more tiresome than waiting an hour at a railway station?—Waiting two.

What is the difference between a surgeon and a book containing no songs of praise?—The one hacks limbs, the other lacks hymns.

Who in this room is most like a sheep?—Ewe (You).

Why would not Prince Alfred have anything to do with foreign Greece?—Because he preferred his own domestic and native *Ile*.

William Warble's Bouquet,

Culled from the Poets.

BEAUTY.

Cerulean beauty stuff'd the sky,
The sunshine wasn't clear,
When Mary lifted to her mug
A mug of ginger-beer.

CIRCUMSTANCE.—THE ORANGE.

It ripen'd by the river banks,
Where, mask and moonlight aiding,
Dons Blas and Juan play sad pranks,
Dark donnas serenading.

By Moorish maiden it was pluck'd,
Who through the grove was stealing;
By Saxon sweetheart it was suck'd—
Who flung away the peeling.

She could not know in Pimlico,
As little she in Seville,
That I should reel upon that peel,
And find my proper level!

GILBERT A'BECKET'S POLKA SONG.

Few things of the higher macaronic are superior to the late "Gilbert á-Becket's Polka Song," when that dance was first made popular in England:—

Qui nunc dancere vult modo,
Wants to dance in the fashion O,
Discere debet—ought to know
Kickere floor cum heel and toe.
One, two, three,
Hop with me
Whirligig, twirligig, rapide.

Polkam jungere, virgo, vis?
Will you join the polka, miss?
Liberius—most willingly,
Sic agimus—then let us try.
Nunc vide,
Skip with me,
Whirlabout, roundabout, celere.

Tum laevâ cito, tum dextrâ,
First to the left, and then t'other way:
Aspice retro in vultu,
You look at her, and she looks at you.
Das palmam,
Change hands, ma'am,
Celere—run away—just in sham.

How to Pronounce "ough."—The ending syllable "ough," which is such a terror to foreigners, is shown up in its several pronunciations in the following lines:—

Wife, make me some dumplings of dough,
They're better than meat for my cough,
Pray, let them be boiled hot through,
But not till they're heavy or tough.

Now, I must be off to my plough,
And the boys (when they've had enough)
Must keep the flies off with a bough,
While the old mare drinks at the trough.

A Stanza for Tobacco Smokers.

By a Scotch Lady.

May never lady press his lips, his proffered love returning,
Who makes a furnace of his mouth, and keeps his chimney burning.
May each true woman shun his sight, for fear his fumes would choke her,
And none but those who smoke themselves have kisses for a smoker.

Snuff-taking.

What a moment, what a doubt!
All my nose is inside out—
All my thrilling, tickling caustic,
Pyramid rhinocerostic,
Wants to sneeze and cannot do it!
How it yearns me, thrills me, stings me,
How with rapturous torment fills me!
Now says, "Sneeze, you fool—get throught it."
Shee—shee—O, 'tis most del-ishi—
Ishi—ishi—most del-ishi!
(Hang it, I shall sneeze till spring!)
Snuff is a most delicious thing.

ODE TO A GOOSE.

Written after Dinner on the Feast of St. Michael.

Strophe I.

O bird most rare! although thou art
Uncommon common on a common,
What man or woman
Can in one single term impart
A proper name for thee?—An Ancient Roman

Would answer—"*Anser.*" Sure I am, that no man,
Knowing thy various attributes, would choose
To call thee Goose!

ANTISTROPHE.

No, Goose! thou art no Goose. Well stuff'd with sag
And titillating things, both dead and living,
For ever art thou giving
Solace to man in life's brief pilgrimage.

EPODE I.

Jove's eagle wielding the avenging thunder,
Is but a folio hawk, a bird of plunder;
Minerva's owl,
(Both are foul fowl!)
Shunning the light, should ne'er have been preferr'd
To rank as Wisdom's bird;
As for the young and stately swan,
A Scottish lawyer is the man
To sing its praises.
I am no writer to the cygnet—so,
Avoiding further periphrases,
For thee alone, O Goose! my verse shall flow.

STROPHE II.

O bird of Morpheus! half our lives are sped
(Ay, and the happiest too) upon a bed
Stuff'd with thy feathers. On thy breast
Thou hushest us to rest,
As if we were thy goslings,
Till we forget life's hubble-bubble,
Its toil and trouble,
Its crossings and its jostlings,
And borne in dreams to empyrean latitudes,
Revel in ecstasies and bright beatitudes.

ANTISTROPHE II.

Churls that we are! what snoozing hum
Ascends to thee!—what pæans, what adorings!
Our mouths, perchance, are open, but they're dumb:
Our soul harangues
Are nasal twangs,
And all our gratitude consists of snorings.

EPODE II.

Bird of Apollo! worthy to pluck grass
On the Parnassian mountain,
Beside the classic fountain
Of Hippocrene, what Muse with thee can class,
To whose inspiring wing we owe
All that the poets past have writ;
From whose ungather'd wings shall flow
All our whole store of future wit?
Well mayst thou strut,
Proud of thy pens uncut
Which shall cut jokes,
In after-times, for unborn folks;—
Well mayst thou plume thyself upon thy plumage—all
Is erudite and intellectual,
Each wing a cyclopædia, fraught
With genius multiform, a world of thought!
Ah! when thou putt'st thy head
Beneath that wing to bed,
In future libraries thou tak'st a nap,
And dream'st of Paternoster-row, mayhap!
What are *they* dreaming of, that they forget
(The publishing and scribbling set)
To apotheosise thee, Goose!
As the tenth Muse?

ANTISTROPHE III.

And then the darling driblets,
That constitute thy giblets,

Whether in soup or stew'd,
Oh! what delectable and dainty food!
Full of my subject ('twas my dinner dish),
No wonder that I feel all over goosy,
Fired with what Braham calls *entusimusy*,
So much so, I could almost wish,
If fate were nothing loth,
To be a Goose instead of man.
"Be double happy on thy present plan"
(Methinks the reader cries),
"And thank the favouring destinies,
For now thou'rt *both!*"

A QUAINT EFFUSION, BY GEORGE HERBERT.

I blesse thee, Lord, because I *grow*
Among thy trees, which in a *row*
To thee both fruit and order *ow*.
What open force or hidden *charm*
Can blast my fruit or bring me *harm*,
While the inclosure is thine *arm?*
Inclose me still for fear I *start*,
Be to me rather sharp and *tart*,
Than let me want thy hand and *art*.
When thou dost greater judgments *spare*,
And with thy knife but prune and *pare*,
Ev'n fruitful trees more fruitful *are*.
Such sharpness shows the sweetest *frend*,
Such cuttings rather heal than *rend*,
And such beginnings touch their *end*.

EPIGRAM.

"Attend your church," the parson cries;
To church each fair one goes;
The old go there to close their eyes,
The young to eye their clothes.

Mrs. Jones's Quaint Collection of Queer Epitaphs.

In Hadleigh churchyard, Suffolk:—

"To free me from domestic strife,
Death called at my house, but he spoke with my wife,
Susan, wife of David Pattison, lies here—
Oct. 19, 1706—
Stop, reader, and, if not in a hurry, shed a tear."

Inscribed by a Mr. Kemp on his wife (after recording her name, age, and time of death):—

"Whether in the other world she'll
Know her brother John,
Or scrape acquaintance with
Her sister Soame,
Is not for me to inquire;
But this I know—
She once was mine,
And now
To Thee, O Lord, I her resign;
And am your humble servant,
ROBERT KEMP."

In Cheltenham churchyard:—

"Here lies the body of Molly Dickie, the wife of Hall Dickie, tailor.
Two great physicians first
My loving husband tried
To cure my pain—
In vain;
At last he got a third,
And then I died."

On a man who was killed by hitting his head against a pump:—

"Here lies John Adams, who received a thump
Right on the forehead from the parish pump,
Which gave him the *quietus* in the end,
For many doctors did his case attend."

On a tombstone at Brighton:—

"Mary Atkinson, died January 1st, 1716, aged 77.
'Periwinkles!' 'Periwinkles!'
Was ever her cry;
She labour'd to live,
Poor and honest to die.
At the last day again,
How her old eyes will twinkle;
For no more will she cry,
'Periwinkle!' 'Periwinkle!'
Ye rich, be virtuous; want regard, pray give:
Ye poor, by her example learn to live."

On a tombstone at Auvergne is the following simple, beautiful, and touching epitaph:—

"Maria was the only child of her mother,
And she was a widow;
Maria sleeps in her grave—
And the widow has now no child."

Bideford churchyard contributes this ludicrous rhyme:—

"The wedding day appointed was,
The wedding clothes provided;
But ere the day did come—ah!
He sicken'd and he die did!"

At Loch Rausa:—

"Here lies Donald and his wife,
Janet Mac Fee:
Aged 40 hee
And 30 shee."

Chevening-le-Clay, Dorsetshire, rejoices in the next. After recording the death of his beloved wife, Anne Hughes, the afflicted husband breaks forth in this pious strain:—

"Who far below this tomb doth rest
Has joined the army of the blest;
The Lord has ta'en her to the sky,
The saints rejoice, and so do I."

At Elsham, in Northamptonshire, can be found the epitaph of Mr. Freer:—

"My name it was Nathaniel Freer,
I lived and laughed, but now I'm here;
Such as I am, such you must be,
Then make your game and follow me."

On Richard Button, Esq., who was interred in a cemetery near Salisbury:—

"Oh Sun! Moon! Stars! and the celestial poles!
Are graves then dwindled into Button-holes?"

On a Cricketer, in the same churchyard:—

"I bowl'd, I struck, I caught, I stopped—
Sure life's a game of cricket—
I blocked with care, with caution popped,
Yet Death has hit my wicket."

In Gateshead churchyard is the following epitaph to the memory of the architect of the Exchange and Guildhall:—

"Here lies Robert Trollop,
Who made yon stones roll up;
When Death took his soul up,
His body filled this hole up."

In the churchyard of Sevenoaks, Kent, is recorded this curious couplet:—

"Grim Death took me without any warning;
I was well and dead at nine the next morning."

A tomb to the memory of a lawyer in Eureton churchyard, Norfolk, bears this humorous notification:—

"God works a wonder now and then;
He, though a lawyer, was an honest man!"

The following in Arnold churchyard, Notts, to the memory of Mary Severton, who died August 11th 1853, aged 65 years, shows that the deceased was thoroughly disgusted with worldly matters:—

"The world that men so highly prize,
And seek so eagerly its smile,
What is it?—Vanity and lies—
A broken cistern all the while!!"

This couplet is very pithily expressed:—

"This grave is cold, but how I love it,
For colder are my friends above it."

From a churchyard in Cornwall:—

"Belgium me birth, Britain my breeding gave,
Cornwall a wife, ten children, and a grave."

Here is an inscription taken from the graveyard attached to Melbourne Abbey:—

"The earth walks on the earth, glittering with gold,
The earth goes to the earth sooner than it would;
The earth builds on the earth castles and towers;
The earth says to the earth, all shall be ours."

Epitaph from Lynn churchyard, Norfolk:—

"A careful woman I have been,
And many troubles I have seen;
Yet while on earth I did my best,
And now my bones lie here at rest."

"Who lies here?
Timothy Matthews. Give him some beer.
A dead man beer; ah! for why?
Because when he was alive he was always dry;
Then up steps his old neighbour, Foot,
And says if he is dry now, let him suck at the root."

Bishop Warburton says he saw the following epitaph in Northumberland:—

"Here lies, to parents, friends, and country dear,
A youth, who scarce had seen his seventeenth year;
But in that time so much good sense had shown,
That Death mistook seventeen for seventy-one."

"John Jones, here he lies—
Nobody laughs, nobody cries;
Where he's gone, or how he fares,
Nobody knows, nobody cares."

"Here lies John Freer,
Dumfries piper.
What, young John?
Fie! fie!
Old John?
Ay! ay!"

The following is from Dawlish parish church:—

"Here I lie at ye church door,
Here I lie because I'se poor;
Ye furder you go ye more you pay,
Here I lie as warm as they."

The following epitaph is in the churchyard of St. Andrew-the-Less, Cambridge:—

"—— Stewart, died 1772, æt. 46 years.
Man's life is like a winter's day;
Some only Breakfast and away,
Others to Dinner stay and are full fed,
The oldest man but Sups and goes to bed.
Long is his life who lingers out the day,
Who goes the soonest has the least to pay."

On Samuel Kershaw, a blacksmith at one time in Rochdale. Of the date of his death we can give no information, as the tombstone is broken off at the place where the date was:—

"My hammer and my anvil lie declined;
My bellows, too, have lost their wind;
My fire 's extinct, my forge decayed,
And in the dust my vice is laid;
My coal is spent, my iron is gone,
My last nail driv'n, and my work is done."

In the church of East Hucknall, Derbyshire, in memory of one of the Duke of Devonshire's park-keepers:—

"My gun's discharged,
My ball is gone,
My powder's spent,
My work is done.
Those panting deer
I've left behind
May now have time
To gain their wind,
Since I, who oft have
Chased them o'er
The verdant plains,
Am now no more."

On a tombstone in Berkeley churchyard, Gloucestershire:—

"Here lies the Earl of Suffolk's Fool,
Men call'd him Dicky Pearce;
His folly served to make folks laugh,
When wit and mirth were scarce.
Poor Dick, alas! is dead and gone,
What signifies to cry?
Dickeys enough are still behind,
To laugh at by-and-by.
Buried 18th June, MDCCXXVIII.
Aged LXIII years.

My Lord that's gone, made himself much sport of him."

In a churchyard at Frodsham, Cheshire, is the following:—

"Here lies I—
Jonathan Fry—
Killed by a sky-
Rocket in my eye-
Socket."

In the churchyard of Pewsey:—

"Here lies the body
Of Lady O'Looney,
Great-niece of Burke, commonly called the Sublime.
She was
Bland, passionate, and deeply religious;
Also she painted in water-colours,
She sent several pictures to the Exhibition.
She was first cousin to Lady Jones;
And of such is the Kingdom of Heaven."

The following is also a genuine transcript:—

"Here lie the remains of Thomas Woodhen—
The most amiable of husbands, the most excellent of men.
N.B.—The name is Wood*cock*, but it would not come in rhyme."

In a churchyard in Wales is the following on a doctor:—

"Many I've raised up from the grave,
And pickled for dissection;
Saved in my turn, I hoped to have
A glorious resurrection."

Another, on a celebrated statesman, is as follows:—

"The loudest, longest speakers—I'd out-prate 'em,
Deep was I skilled in diplomatic forms;
Death now has sent me in my ultimatum,
And I come to form your 'Diet,' Worms!"

Another, in the same place :—

"Beneath this stone, a lump of clay,
Lies Arabella Young;
Who, on the twenty-fourth of May,
Began to hold her tongue."

The following epitaph is to be found in a graveyard at Baton Rouge, La. :—

"Here lies buried in this tomb
A constant sufferer from salt rheum,
Which finally in truth did pass
To spotted erysipelas.
A husband brave, a father true,
Here he lies, and so must you."

Epitaph by Moore :—

"Here lies John Shaw,
Attorney-at-law;
And when he died
The devil cried,
'Give us your paw,
John Shaw,
Attorney-at-law.'"

Epigrammatic Epitaph :—

"This corpse
Is Tommy Thorpe's." (First idea.)

Revised edition :—

"Thorpe's
Corpse."

The following is from a tombstone in Baschurch churchyard :—

"Here we lie, deprived of life—
First the husband, then the wife;
Sudden death hath brought us hither,
So here we lie and sleep together."

An inscription on a tombstone in a graveyard reads thus:—

"John Smith accidentally shot as a mark of affection by his brother."

The following epitaph, from Mildred churchyard, Scotland, cannot be too severely censured:—

"A noted locksmith died of late,
And when arrived at Heaven's gate,
There he stood, but would not knock,
Because he meant to pick the lock."

The following epitaph, on the tomb of David Birkenhead, in Davenham churchyard, Cheshire, will read far better:—

"A tailor by profession,
And in the practice a plain and honest man:
He was a useful member of society;
For though he picked holes in no man's coat,
He was ever ready to repair
The mischief that others did;
And whatever *breaches* broke out in *families*,
He was the man to mend *all*,
And make matters up *again*:
He lived and died respected.
Forty years' service in Lord Penrhyn's family induced Lady Penrhyn to bestow this stone to his memory."

The following quaint epitaph, dated 1670, is inscribed on a tomb erected to the memory of Robert and Mary Moore, and their daughter Frances, in Marnhall churchyard, Dorsetshire:—

"See what Death with spade hath done to we,
Having now planted both bud, branch, and tree."

On a man named Penny:—

"Reader, if of cash you are in want of any,
Dig ten feet deep and you will find a Penny."

On a bad architect:—

"Lie heavy on him, Earth, for he
Laid many a heavy load on thee."

A husband writes of his "better" half thus:—

"Here rests my spouse; no pair through life
So equal lived as we did;
Alike we shared perpetual strife,
Nor knew I rest till she did."

At Folbroke, in Northumberland, Matthew Hollingshed deplores his untimely doom as follows. It will be observed that although Matthew is circumstantial, he is by no means grammatical:—

"Here lieth Matthew Hollingshed,
Who died from cold caught in his head.
It brought on fever and rheumatiz,
Which ended me—for here I is."

A wretched old bachelor describes himself thus:—

"At three-score winters' end I died,
A cheerless being, sole and sad;
The nuptial knot I never tied,
And wish my father never had."

In the churchyard of Deskford, Cullen, Banffshire, is the following epitaph:—

"Hic jacet Johannes Aberdonensis,
Who built the churchyard dyke at his own expenses."

Near Warwick, nothing else on the stone being legible:—

"Poorly lived,
And poorly died,
Poorly buried,
And no one cried."

It would be hard to compress the story of a cold and *luckless life, death,* and burial into fewer words.

On a tombstone at Melton Mowbray, Leicestershire:—

"Here lies the wife of Simon Stokes,
Who lived and died—like other folks."

On a lady whose name was Stone:—

"Curious enough, we all must say,
That what was Stone should now be clay;
Most curious still, to own we must,
That what was Stone will soon be dust."

In a churchyard in Staffordshire, and hardly to be surpassed in terse and simple pathos:—

"This turf has drunk a widow's tear;
Three of her husbands slumber here."

In St. Giles' churchyard, Northampton:—

"Here lies a most dutiful daughter, honest and just,
Awaiting the resurrection, in hopes to be one of the first."

"Here lies John Bunn,
Who was killed by a gun.
His name wasn't Bunn, but his real name was Wood,
But Wood wouldn't rhyme with gun, so I thought Bunn should."

"John Macpherson was a remarkable person.
He stood 6 feet 2 without his shoe,
And he was slew at Waterloo."

"This little hero that lies here,
Was conquered by the diarrheer."

As soon as the guests had done ample justice to the luxuries which the hospitable hostess had placed before them, they retired to the drawing-room, with the exception of the Misses Armstrong, Tozer, and Gilpin, Plastic and Warble, to whom had been intrusted the characters in the Drawing-room Burlesque which was to wind up the evening's entertainment.

While the supper-table was being cleared, and the dining-room arranged for the representation of the play, the guests were left to amuse themselves as best they might, whilst the five performers, who had fortunately already had three or four rehearsals, conned their parts over for the last time. Mr. Stouter was soon busily engaged in giving his old friend a vivid account of the way in which he knocked a boy's hat off in church the last Sunday, in accordance with churchwardens' law on the subject; and the young people gathered round the piano, and chatted together, whilst Bessie Gilpin sang a little song to amuse them. Mrs. Jones, left to herself, soon joined her husband and Mr. Stouter, and entered into a disquisition on the subject of domestic economy, during which the hostess informed her guest that it was such a clever idea to have the play directly after supper; "For then, Mr. Stouter," said she, "the people can't stay very long at the meal, as they are all anxious to hear the performance, and the actors themselves, you know, are too nervous to eat anything. It is in many respects superior to that bad custom of having supper standing and allowing people to go in when they like, and it is certainly much cheaper."

Just then the folding-doors that led into the drawing-room opened, and the performance of the following Burlesque began :—

Vivat Regina!

GOLDENHAIR;

OR,

THE LAST OF THE FAIRIES.

A Drawing-Room Burlesque.

IN THREE ACTS.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

Patty Silverstreake (who, though an *unmarried* lady of a certain age, has still a heart *un-marred* to see the happiness of the younger people) . . . **Miss Emily Tozer.**

Rosabel (Lady Manyacres' only daughter, of whom we need only say that she *rose a belle* every morning) **Miss Gilpin.**

Goldenhair (a most charming creature, who from the *fair hies* to assist other *fairies* in bewitching Young Wildwood) **Miss Armstrong.**

Young Wildwood (who, though betrothed to Rosabel, is constantly longing to meet some *elfish* creature, which *selfish* notion it will be the moral of this little play to drive out of his head) . . . . . **Mr. Plastic.**

Foxbrush (a Country Squire, who, considering his fondness for open-air exercise, and his unimportance in this burlesque, may be set down as a mere "walking gentleman") **Mr. Warble.**

TIME—MODERN.

Costumes of the period, with the exception of GOLDENHAIR *and the* FAIRIES, *who should appear in the most approved fairy dress.*

GOLDENHAIR;

OR,

THE LAST OF THE FAIRIES.

Act the First.

An ancient Drawing-room in Wildwood Hall. Large open window at back. PATTY SILVERSTREAKE *discovered at tea.*

CONCERTED PIECE.—*Air, "Early in the Morning."*

Patty. Here comes the lovely Rosabel,
The girl Wildwood should love so well.
A friendly heart with joy beats true.

Enter ROSABEL, *through window.*

Ros. Oh, Patty, dear, I've not seen you
Since early in the evening,
Since early in the evening.

Patty. Quite early in the evening—

Ros. When I sat down to *tay.*
Oh, didn't she seem to like it!
Oh, didn't she seem to like it!
Oh, didn't she seem to like it!

Patty Like what?

Ros. Your cup of *tay.*

Patty. (*embracing* ROSABEL). Welcome, my Rosabel.

Ros. Thank you.

Patty. My dear,
You were engaged, the autumn of last year,
To young Wildwood, a widow's only joy,
Her pride, her hope,—excuse me if I cr(o)y;
My feelings cause tears o'er my lids to hover;—
Pray tell me,—does he treat you as a lover?

Ros. Well, as you ask me, I must say,—he don't.

Patty. He don't?

Ros. He don't.

Patty. You mean to say he won't.

Ros. I scarce know what to say. He loves me well—
At least he used to; now he seeks the *dell*,
T(d)ells me he'll shun the world, where grief and care is,
And says my *fair eyes* won't do after *fairies*.

Patty. The claim towards my dear friend he shall drop:
At all events, we ought his freaks to stop.
[*Coming forward.*] I have a *plan which* will, with few expenses,
Bring back young Wildwood to his proper senses.
I as a *plain witch* will dress up to-night,
And lead him, when the stars are shining bright,
Unto the forest: there, too, will I bring—
But may I?

Ros. Yes, yes!

Patty. Then about one I'll sing.

DUET.—*Air, Trio from "Burlesque Galop."*

Patty. I know a little elfish girl
Who sings at Wildwood fair,
With strangelike features, wondering eyes,
And pretty golden hair.
I'll dress her up, as fairies dress
In pantomimes, myself,
That when Young Wildwood sees the girl,
He'll take her for an elf.

Ros. It seems to me a foolish plan,
To make one's lover true,
To put right in his way a girl
More fairylike than you.
But when he finds her out, no doubt,
He will prefer myself;
And yet, I'll own, I'm jealous of
That pretty little elf.

Chorus.—Tol de lol, &c.

[PATTY *and* ROSABEL *dance out.*

Enter WILDWOOD.

AIR.—"*We met.*"

Y. Wild. I've been into the woods, with the sun settin round me—
'Neath a tree, upon the grass, if you'd come, you'd hav found me;
And I thought, as I sat there, 'twas like fairylan seeming,
And that elves did sweetly sing; but I found I'd bee dreaming.

AIR.—"*Billy Patterson.*"

And I fancied the fairies did sing me a song—
It wasn't "Oh, Billy Patterson!"
And told me their revels I should see ere long:
Joy will kill me! joy will kill me!
Their music so tuneful and lovely did seem—
Not like "Oh, Billy Patterson!"
Like the music we fancy we hear in a dream.
Joy did fill me! joy did fill me!
I woke up with a cry;
The sun had left the sky,
The grass was wet with dew;
I'd been asleep I knew.
I'll bet ten dollars down,
I will—I will—I will,
That no singer in London town
Could such sweet music trill.

Yes, certain 'tis the dream has turned my brain;
I only wish they'd sing to me again.
There must be fairies in that dreamy dell—
I know there must. But here comes Rosabel;
She's very pretty, but she's not a fairy.

Enter ROSABEL.

Ros. A gipsy woman waits out in the airy.

Y. Wild. Admit her.

Enter PATTY SILVERSTREAKE, *in a large red cloak.*

Patty. Bless you, lady fair, and you, man.
Pity the sorrows of a poor old *woman*,
Who's seen much *woe, man*, lived midst grief and tears,
And hasn't tasted food for many years!

Ros. She goes too far, and yet he don't see through it.

Y. Wild. I'll help her—in burlesque they always do it.
Here's money for you.

Patty. Thank you, sir, for sich;
[*Throwing off cloak, and showing witch's dress.*
And now behold! you've been and helped a witch.

Y. Wild. A *witch!*

Patty. One *which* can tell your lucky star.

Y. Wild. Suppose she's Cinderella's godmamma!

Patty. Listen! I know what thoughts are in your mind;
And as to this old witch you have been kind,
I'll take you to an elf so young and fair—
A darling creature—little Goldenhair!
Who often in the *woodlands* has you seen,
When you have *wooed lands* flower-decked and green;
Has watched you, loved you, followed everywhere.
Say, "Will you come to the bower?"

Y. Wild. "I'll be there!"

CONCERTED PIECE.—*Air*, "*Come dwell with me.*"

Patty. Come, come with me,—come, come with me,
And you shall see, and you shall see,
The elfin spirits bright and fair,
And with them pretty Goldenhair.

Ros. I hope no harm to him will come—
I almost wish he'd stay at home;
And then the dewy evening air
Might give a cold to Goldenhair.

All. That elfin creature, young and fair,
Dear, pretty, little Goldenhair!
Oh, Goldenhair! oh, Goldenhair!

Y. Wild. I seem to be—I seem to be,

A prince like those in plays we see;
For shall I not behold the fair
And darling elfin, Goldenhair!

Ros. Left all alone, as I shall be,
I'll have another cup of tea.

Patty. Come, Wildwood, come! at once repair
To see the fairy Goldenhair.

All. That elfin creature, young and fair,
Dear, pretty, little Goldenhair,
Oh, Goldenhair! oh, Goldenhair!

[*Music pp.* PATTY *leads* YOUNG WILDWOOD *mysteriously away through window.* ROSABEL, *in the manner of the conventional "heroine in distress," sinks unconscious on a chair.*

END OF ACT THE FIRST.

Act the Second

The depth of Wildwood Forest. Stage dark.

Enter FOXBRUSH.

Fox. I come before you merely just to say
That I'm Squire Foxbrush, and have lost my way.
I thought I'd take a walk medicinally,
And somehow found myself in this dark valley.
That it's a pretty place there is no doubt of it,
But all I wish is that I could get out of it;
For cold am I, and covered o'er with mire,
In this *queer* place, which does not suit this *squire*.
Yet, as I'll have to wait here all night long,
I'll bear it manfully, and sing a song.

SONG.—*Air*, "*La Donna e mobile*" (*Rigoletto*).

Weary it looks to-night,
No stars are shining bright;
I wish the moon her light
Me would be showing;

That my way I might see
Out of this dark valee,
Where supper waits for me.
O, I am growing
Weary, would be sleeping,
Dreary, would be creeping
Homewards. Come, moon, peeping
Here—light me home.
Lady Moon, lady Moon,
Lady Moon, light me home,
Oh! light me home.

[*Fairies, without, laugh accompaniment to the concluding lines.* FOXBRUSH, *frightened, runs off. Dreamy music. The stage becomes lighter, as if the moon was rising. The Fairies enter, one after the other, from each side, who form line, up which enters* GOLDENHAIR.

CHORUS.—*Air, "Power of Love"* (*Satanella*).

Fairies, fairies, fairies,
Are we all to-night;
Fairies, fairies, fairies,
Neath the pale moonlight;
Fairies, fairies, fairies,
All from Wildwood fair;
Fairies, fairies, fairies,
Whose queen is Goldenhair.

Golden. From the fair at Wildwood
Goldenhair has come,
To these woods romantic;
And, ere she goes home,
She will charm young Wildwood,
While stars shine above
Make him feel her power—
The power—the power of love.

Golden. [*à la Henry 5th*]. My fairies, water-nymphs, sprites, elves, and pixies,
In fact, all kinds of pantomimic chicksies,

Before we in our acting further go,
I hope you everyone your parts do know;
For nothing doth this elfin so enrage
As to see players standing on the stage
In awkward attitudes, and ne'er a word
Can speak until the Prompter's voice is heard.
You know the reason you are drest as *fairies*,
And why I from the *fair is* called here. Rare is
The fun to be, if you your parts play good,
Though none but I must speak to young Wildwood,
Whom *I see coming*. *Come in* 'neath the bushes,
Though it is rather *icee* near those *rushes*.

1*st Fairy*. He *rushes* near us.

Golden. Hide, then, near the rill,
And mind you all obey me, elves.

Fairies. We will.

[*Music*. GOLDENHAIR *and Fairies hide behind trees*.

Enter PATTY SILVERSTREAKE (*as the Witch*), *leading* YOUNG WILDWOOD.

Y. Wild. We've reached the dell at last. It seemed so far
To-night.

Patty. Yes, as the clown says, "here we are!"
But I must leave you now.

Y. Wild. Well, good-bye, witch.

Patty [*in the manner of fortune-tellers*]. May you be happy all your life, and rich. [*Exit*.

Y. Wild. Most people in my place would feel some fear,
But I don't. Goldenhair! where are you, dear?
You pretty elfin darling. O pray don't fly
From me.

Enter GOLDENHAIR *and Fairies, suddenly*.

Golden. As Lagardère says, "Here am I!"
[*Aside*]. Already we his mind by this strange *fetch stir*.

Y. Wild. [*confused*]. Yes, the "Duke's Motto"—
though for Mr. *Fechter*
Just now I scarcely care—all plays would flee 'em—
Fairies! Like those in dreams oft will *I see em* (*Lyceum*).

Golden. O mortal, who's been dreaming night and day
About the time when you would meet a fay,
Behold your dear wish granted! This night fair
You see the elves and also Goldenhair.

Y. Wild. I've heard of fairies with their eyes so blue,
But none I've heard of can compare with you.
You are so pretty. By those stars above you,
I—that is—you know—Goldenhair, I love you!

Golden. You do; well, I've also a thing to tell,
That is, young Wildwood, I love you as well.

Y. Wild. You darling! Ask me anything, I'll *do it.*

Golden. Run away, elves, we're going to sing a *duet.*

DUET.—*Air, "The Rose will cease to blow."*

Y. Wild. The rose will cease to blow,
The eagle turn a dove.
Golden. That song is old, I know,
Yet it is one I love.
Y. Wild. The sun will cease to set,
The birds will quit the air,
Ere Wildwood can forget
His pretty Goldenhair.
Both. The rose will cease to blow,
The eagle turn a dove,
The stream will cease to flow,
Ere I will cease to love.
Golden. I ought to say, I know,
I love you more than life,
That down life's stream we'll flow
Together, without strife.
Y. Wild. And I likewise should swear
You're all the world to me.

That happy anywhere
With you I'd always be.

Both. The rose will cease to blow, &c.

Golden. Well, as you love me, dear, and I love you,
And if to me you always will be true,
This little fairy will give you her hand—
In fact, will make you king of Fairy Land.
Then you, of course, must lead a life like me,
Live in the forest, and no cities see;
Drink nought but *dew*—not *mountain dew*, you know;
Must dance all night beneath the moon's pale glow;
Must live on *air*—that's not *aer*ated bread;
Sleep on some mossy bank, but ne'er to bed
Can go. Come, do you like this kind of life?

Y. Wild. With such a pretty creature for a wife,
There's scarcely anything I would not do;
"Fly on a bat's back," "go where the bee sucks," too;
Shun bricks and mortar, make my home the wood,
With the *wood robin*, just like *Robin Hood*.

Golden. I've no expenses.

Y. Wild. Tradesmen we won't fear.

Golden. Living's so *cheap*, too.

Y. Wild. You're a little *dear*.

Golden. But now my fairy kingdom you shall see.

Y. Wild. Lead on, dear Goldenhair, I'll follow thee.

SONG.—*Air*, "*Guiding Star*" (*Robin Hood*).

Y. Wild. Your gentle voice shall lead me on,
My own dear Goldenhair.
Where'er you tell me to be gone,
At once I will repair.
Your laughing eyes make all things seem
So good, so bright, so very fair;
You'll make my life one happy dream,
My little Goldenhair.

Yes, your gentle voice will lead me on,
My own dear Goldenhair,
My pretty little Goldenhair.
[*Exeunt, in the manner of stage lovers.*

Enter PATTY SILVERSTREAKE.

Patty. The plot works well, and yet I have a fear—
Suppose that very pretty little dear
Should really love Young Wildwood, and so take
Him off from here to church, and somehow make
Him marry her. It might do very well
In some romantic opera; but "tell"
In real life it wouldn't. So, with such an *idea*,
I'd hear their conversation, and will *hide here.*
[*Conceals herself behind trees. Music.* YOUNG WILDWOOD *and* GOLDENHAIR *enter at back, with the Fairies.*

Golden. And so a woodland life don't seem alarming.
Y. Wild. With such a dear as you it will be charming.
Golden. [*aside*]. If I had known the danger that I ran,
I ne'er would have assisted in their plan;
This poor boy loves me; I am likewise caught,
For I love him, I do!
Patty [*looking in*]. Just as I thought.
Golden. A voice!
Y. Wild. *Some day bird* seeking its repose.
Ah me! *some day, bird,* I shall, I suppose,
Live just as you do. O, I feel so glad!
But, darling Goldenhair, you're looking sad;
Why, what's the matter, dear?
Golden. Don't ask! don't ask!
[*Aside*]. From off my "hollow heart" I'll throw the mask.
Dear Wildwood, you must wake up from your dream;
[*à la Iago*]. Listen to me. I am not what I seem!
Y. Wild. I don't care what you are; you seem to me
A darling, and as such will ever be.

Golden. I am—O, would I here had never come!—
I am—
Y. Wild. Well, never mind.
Golden. I am—
Patty (*suddenly appearing to* GOLDENHAIR). Go home!

CONCERTED PIECE.—*Air*, "*Come where the moonbeams linger.*"

Patty. No longer may you linger,
Go from the fairy scene.
Y. Wild. Strangely the witch is speaking
Unto the fairy queen.
[*Repeat last three lines.*
Y. Wild. } Good-bye, good-bye, my darling;
Golden. } Though parted we now must be,
I swear to-night, by all that's bright,
I ne'er will love but thee,
I never will love but thee, &c.
Patty. Come, come, come.
All. No longer must we linger
In this bright fairy scene,
So come, come, come, come,
Come from the fairy scene.
[*Exeunt* GOLDENHAIR *and* FAIRIES *at back.*
Y. Wild. She's gone! she's gone! Now life seems cold and drear,
Come back! come back! you pretty little dear!
Patty. Now, bear it like a man.
Y. Wild. A man, I ain't,
I'm Fairy King! Ha! ha! I'm ill! I faint!
[*Falls on the ground senseless.*
Patty. Things have come to a pretty *pass* indeed.
What would the *parson* say? But now I need
Some help to get this boy off. Hollo! hollo!
Help! help! help!
Fox. [*outside*]. *Hollo!* who's that in the *hollow?*

Patty. It's me!
Fox. Who's me?
Patty. Come, see!
Fox. I wish I could!
I'm caught in brambles!

Enter FOXBRUSH, *with his clothes torn.*

Fox. Hullo! Young Wildwood!
What does he here? And who are you, old woman?
Patty. I'm Patty Silverstreake; so help me, do, man,
To bring him back to life—you see he's fainted.
[PATTY *takes off witch's dress.*
Fox. Murdered! garotted p'rhaps.
Y. Wild. [*rising suddenly*]. O, no, I ain't dead;
But where am I? and where's my fairy gone?
What! Patty here!
Fox. I ache in ev'ry bone,
I bleed, I shiver *too* from *foot to*(*e*) head.
Patty [*putting nightcap on*]. I think we'd better all go home to bed.

TRIO.—*Air*, "*Juanita.*"

Sleepily seeming,
Are we 'neath the silent moon,
Of slumber dreaming,
In which we'll be soon.

Talk of moonlight splendour,
Talk of stars that brightly peep;
O, who would surrender,
For them, balmy sleep?

Night-a, yes, good night-a,
We will sing as home we tread;
Night-a, yes, good night-a,
Off we go to bed!

[*Repeat Chorus pianissimo, as curtain falls.*

END OF ACT THE SECOND.

Act the Third.

A Breakfast-room in Wildwood Hall. Early Morning. Birds singing without.

Enter PATTY SILVERSTREAKE.

Patty. A witch no more in Patty you will see.
Yes, she's herself again. It was a spree
We had last night, before the day was dawning;
When I——

Enter ROSABEL.

Ros. Dear Patty Silverstreake, good morning.
I got up early, did this Rosabel,
Because she wished to hear about the spell
You cast upon Young Wildwood. Was he glad?
Oh, tell me!

Patty. Well, it turned out rather bad.
The girl I brought to carry out my whim
Went on too far, and fell in love with him.
But come into the *garding*, and talk there.

Ros. I would be *guarding* Wildwood, so'll stay here. [*Exit* PATTY.

MUSIC.—"*Come into the garden, Maud.*"

Ros. To think that he whom I have known from childhood
Should so neglect poor me. Oh, Wildwood, *Wildwood!*
You drive me *wild would*, if I did not know
That Goldenhair has gone back to her show;
And when you find out who she is, and how
Absurd you have been going on, you'll vow—
At least you ought to—never more of elf
Or fay to dream; that is, conduct yourself
In way befitting to your rank of life,

Or never, never will I be your wife.
Me heart is breaking, me'll faint, *me'll—oh!—die—*
Stop! In burlesque, grief ends in *melody*.

SONG.—*Air*, "*Last Rose of Summer.*"

Like the last rose of summer,
I'm alone—all alone!
He who should be my companion
After fairies has gone.
My life's getting very dreary,
My heart is so forlorn.
Oh! I feel so sad and weary,
Like the poor Colleen Bawn.

On the stage, when a lover
From his fond one would be free,
Makes at midnight an appointment
In a water-cave or quarrie;
So I almost wish that Wildwood
Would instruct some one me to slay;
But then I should be rescued,
Like the girl in the "Peep o' Day."

[*Exit.*

Enter YOUNG WILDWOOD.

Y. Wild. Oh, Goldenhair! wherefore art thou Goldenhair?
Why did you leave me, elfin so bright and fair?
In vain I call—Echo not e'en replies.
"Oh, I could play the woman with mine eyes!"
As Shakespeare says, "weep rivers," and likewise
Make trees of any *size* shake with my *sighs*.
Goldenhair! what's that?

[*Melody from "Corsican Brothers," played pianissimo.*

What does it mean?

Enter GOLDENHAIR, *rather shabbily dressed.*

Golden. That she you wished to *see* is on the *scene*.

Y. Wild. My ignorance I *really* must deplore,
I don't remember seeing you before.

Golden. Now that's a *real lie*, leastways a *falsehood*,
And now you *false would* be—last night—the wood.
Dost recollect?—the stars—the scented air—
The elves—enchantment—I am

Both. Goldenhair!

Y. Wild. I see it—no, I don't—my mind's deranged!
Then how is it you are so greatly changed?

Golden. Listen! Well, first of all, I'm not a *fairy*—
Merely a mortal, and from Wildwood *fair I*
Went, with some other dancing girls, to try
And cure you of your imbecility.
We meant all kinds of tricks on you to play,
So that you'd no more after fairies stray;
But what you said to me made this poor elf
So happy, *made* this *maid* forget herself.
It's over now, though, and all I've to say
Is, give up fairy seeking, and good day.

Y. Wild. My fairy dream is over, for 'tis true
That, Goldenhair, no longer I love you,
Except as one that could have o'er me spread
Last night your pow'r, but made a *cure* in*stead*.

DUET.—*Air*, "*Riding in a Railroad Car.*"

Golden. Young Wildwood, I
From you must fly,
But you'll promise, I know,
If you repair
Unto the fair,
To come and see my show.
There you shall see
A traged*ee*,
Or a melodrama*r*,
In which the people play

As quickly as if they
Were riding in a Railroad Car.

Y. Wild. My dream is past,
I've come at last
To find that fairy times
We'll no more see,
Except when we
Are at the pantomimes;
So I'll be glad,
Not like one mad,
Will likewise laugh "ha! ha!"
For in day dreams we see
As strange things as if we
Were riding in a Railroad Car.

[*Comic dance, during which* PATTY *and* ROSABEL *enter, and play on imaginary instruments at back.*

Patty. Well, Goldenhair, I hope you've been explaining.

Golden. I have.

Ros. Then why, Miss, in this place remaining?
The work last night no doubt was very hard,
For which I think she merits some reward.
So I'll be liberal,—it gives me pleasure.
Here's *fourpence* for you, Miss.

Golden. [*throwing away money*]. I *scorn* your treasure.

Y. Wild. Like some *tragédienne* the girl playing is.

Ros. She's trod upon my (*s*)*corns*, as the saying is.

[YOUNG WILDWOOD *and* ROSABEL *talk apart at back.*]

Golden. Forgive me, ladies, but I cannot be
Beholden to your generosi*tee*.
The *part I* played last night, I think of yet,
In fact this *party* never can forget
The lesson she was taught, who tried to teach,
And *fell in* love with one beyond her reach.
Just like a *felon* felt I at the time,
For should not stealing hearts be called a crime?

So my reward is what I learned last night.

Patty. Moral. Young girls like *us* avoid starlight.

Y. Wild. Dear Rosabel, my fairy dream is past.

Ros. Patty, Young Wildwood's a good boy at last.

Patty. Your *ma* will *par*don him then. So will I—
Come to my arms, my boy, let's have a cry.

Y. Wild. No, not just now; this isn't tragedy,
In which no scene occurs without tears fall.

Enter FOXBRUSH.

Fox. I hope I don't intrude.

Ros. Oh, not at all.

Fox. I've come to say that ever since last night,
When I saw Patty home, I've not been right;
At least my heart's not.

Patty. Yes, I see; you mean——?

Fox. I'm rather nervous.

Y. Wild. Come, don't make a scene.

Fox. "My *bark is* on the sea"—my heart is filling
With love o'erflowing, and—"*Barkis* is willing."

Patty. Well, if he has, Patty has no objection.
[*Embrace.*

Y. Wild. A case of sudden elderly affection.

Golden. [*to Audience*]. And while with love they all are going on,
Poor little Goldenhair is left alone;
But that she doesn't mind, if she has made
Some friends of those saw her in the glade,
And who, to show we've not played without cause,
Will drown our farewell chorus with applause.

Y. Wild. And ere the curtain falls, just let me say,
I hope you all have liked our little play.
We've tried to please you, so we hope you'll share
Golden opinions of our "Goldenhair."

FINALE.—*Air*, "*The whole Hog or none.*"

Fox. Oh, ere the curtain falls to-night,
Before the play is done,
Ros. We hope those now before your sight
Have pleased you ev'ry one;
Patty. And, though it is improbable,
Pray don't deride our fun.
Y. Wild. For on the stage we're bound to go
The whole hog or none.
Golden. O lor', girls!
I hope you think us funny,
At all events, like other plays,
Ours ends in matrimony;
Y. Wild. For in burlesque we're bound to go
The whole hog or none.

[*Chorus repeat last lines, and dance till fall of curtain.*

Mrs. Jones's party terminated with the burlesque, and the people, when preparing to go, could not but say that they had had a very pleasant evening; for although the entertainments offered had been somewhat flat and weak in their powers of fascination, yet the pleasure of meeting each other was in itself a sufficient source of enjoyment for the ladies and gentlemen present. Mrs. Jones, the hostess, had passed a very pleasant evening. She had had several opportunities of showing her learning, and was also able to say that not a glass or a plate had been broken, and that a good part of the supper had been left untouched for Sunday's dinner. Mrs. Armstrong, a good, jolly woman, found sufficient enjoyment in the apparent happiness of her daughter, a young lady who, although she did not say very much in public, was yet capable of playing a very creditable and fascinating part in a dialogue, as Jack Plastic found out for himself. It needs scarcely be said that he had spent a pleasant evening. The prominent

character which he had played at the entertainment, the many attentions which he had received at the hands of Miss Tozer, and, above all, the progress he had made in his suit with Polly Armstrong, were sufficient in themselves to cause him to feel happy for a week to come; at least so he said when he took Miss Armstrong home, much to the disgust of Emily, whose cup of pleasure, after being filled by the words Mr. Plastic said to her at supper, was tinged with a little sorrow by Miss Armstrong's improper conduct.

Flutter had also enjoyed himself. Had he not asked riddles without end at supper, and had not the adorable Emily favoured him with a smile once or twice during the evening? What more than this could any man desire? The Misses Gilpin, thanks to the devout attention they had received from Mr. Warble and Harry, could not fail to enjoy themselves, whilst their two lovers vowed that they had never been so happy in the whole course of their lives. Jones and Stouter had revelled in each other's society, had recalled to each other's mind reminiscences of their early life, when they were gay young dogs; and then the story that Mr. Stouter had told about his demi-god, Wippermann, had achieved for him all the glory that his heart could wish; while the fact that all the guests had spent a pleasant evening, was enough to make the kind-hearted Mr. Jones as happy as a king.

The last words that the love-stricken Emily Tozer said that evening as she fondly embraced her mother, were,—

"Oh, Ma, dear, I am so sorry that it's all over."

May the author, in all modesty, venture to hope that the reader is of Miss Tozer's opinion?

The End.

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MRS. JONES TO THE LADIES.

Mrs. Jones.—I regret very much, ladies, that the evening, though long in hours, has been so very very short—your delightful company making hours but shortest minutes; but, before we part, I beg your attendance for a little consultation. I wish to bring to your notice, ladies, an article the existence of which, although some of you may be aware of, I am sure is far from being generally known. In a word, I wish to inform you, that the praises lavished upon me as to the elegant contour of my robes,—their easy and graceful flow, the absence of all rigidity, and the ease with which I was enabled to move about in thronged parts of the *salon*,—are not due entirely to me, but belong rather to this valuable article of my wardrobe,—my crinoline.

All (*among themselves*).—Did you observe, it's just what I thought. How very very kind in Mrs. Jones—the best thing of the evening.

Confiding Friend (*to Mrs. Jones, privately*).—Please, Mrs. Jones, do not impart such a great secret so openly; do but confide it to me for a time, and much more shall be your reward than if given *pro bono publico*.

Mrs. Jones.—My dear lady, I feel that I should do quite wrong to withhold it, for [*to the Ladies*] I feel sure you will, each and all of you, be so very very highly delighted, that you will impart the same to your friends and acquaintances.

All (*with one voice*).—Most certainly.

Mrs. Jones.—By so doing, you will do much good; for not only are these outward charms and results obtained, but, from its lightness, a perceptible improvement in health and spirits. Formerly I have used a covered crinoline, which, although quite nice at first, soon became of bad shape; while the steels were so coarse and wide, that they were not only inconvenient and uncomfortable, but they were so rigid that they always caused displacement of my robes upon coming in contact with any object, as a chair or sofa; and on the promenade, if with

Mr. Jones, he was always annoyed and I was much perplexed; but by these all such difficulties are overcome. I am enabled to enjoy all the comforts of a crinoline, and be quite free from all kindred trials.

Lady E. (*impatient*).—Do, Mrs. Jones, relieve our curiosity, and inform us what it is, where to be had, and how known.

Mrs. Jones.—I did not think to detain you, but I find their qualities so charming, I could not resist dwelling upon one or two of them. Please pardon me. The articles referred to are "Thomson's Prize Medal Crinolines." I found them at my draper's, and am informed that all the best drapers keep them. I believe that, in addition to the name of Thomson, they are stamped with a trade mark—a crown. This, I trust, is enough for me to say to secure for you the same comfort I enjoy.

Lady E.—I am sorry, Mrs. Jones, that I cannot corroborate your experience. I bought one of those "Thomson's Patent," and I thought it—oh! so nice; but in a very few days it had all come to pieces or bent and broken.

Mrs. Jones.—I find I have neglected a very important matter. I was once caught in the same way as Lady E. Thomson's name has been used by others, but their goods are nearly worthless; this was probably the case with the article referred to.

Lady E.—I am quite sure the trade mark was not a crown.

Mrs. Jones.—That quite explains it; and now, ladies, if you will but remember these facts, and put them in use, you will ever thank me, not so much for this party as for this information. I have heard it stated that the Court ladies in France, Germany, Austria, Italy, Spain, and Russia, have all adopted this make; but for me their real worth is of more import than their patronage.

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